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John E. Wool

U. S. A.

A

NARRATIVE

OF

MAJOR GENERAL WOOL'S

CAMPAIGN IN MEXICO,

IN

THE YEARS 1846, 1847 & 1848.

BY FRANCIS BAYLIES.

MASSACHUSETTS.

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CAMPAIGN IN MEXICO.

THE writer of the following narrative, during the progress of the late war between the United States of America and Mexico, became deeply interested in the marvellous events which grew out of it, resembling rather the fictions of romance and chivalry, than the precision and mathematical exactness of modern warfare.

On the question of the admission of Texas into the American Union as one of its states, the writer differed altogether from those with whom he had generally acted in political affairs; and notwithstanding the concurrent views of the leaders of the two great parties, who, on this question, thought alike, and whose opinions it was supposed would have a predominating influence over the whole people; it did seem to him that an opportunity was presented for strengthening our weakest, and, in a commercial view, our most important frontier, which might be lost forever if neglected. Texas had gained her independence by her own prowess, and by driving her Mexican oppressors from her soil. She solemnly proclaimed it, and established a government sufficiently legitimate to satisfy the scruples of Great Britain, France, Belgium, and finally of the United States—the last having been somewhat fastidious on this matter. With her independence acknowledged and her nationality admitted by the greater powers of the world, she offered to negotiate with the American government for admission into the American Union; and a majority of Congress consented to the measure and ratified it, and Texas became one of the United States, while she was yet at war with Mexico, and consequently all the states were under the highest obligations, both constitutionally and honorably to defend her; and it would have been a virtual dissolution of the Union, could one of the states carry on a foreign war, and the others remain at peace, while Texas and Mexico were belligerent: the idea was preposterous. Besides the United States had suffered many wrongs from Mexico, for which no redress could be obtained, even under the stipulations of a treaty. After some fruitless attempts to negotiate, hostilities were resumed, Mexicans crossed the Rio Grande, and two hostile encounters convinced the American government that no alternative remained, but a vigorous prosecution of the war by carrying the arms of the United States into the enemy's country: according to a phrase, current at the time, "*they hoped to conquer a peace.*"

When the American armies began to move on Mexico, the writer made some notes of their transactions, and particularly those of Gen. Wool, who commanded a separate column. The interest which he felt

in his success and safety, was increased by family connection, and an uninterrupted friendship and confidential intercourse for more than twenty years.

The battle of Buena Vista electrified the whole American people, and a despondency which was nearly universal was followed by universal rejoicing. Their apprehensions for the safety of Gen. Taylor's army, with which it was known Gen. Wool's column had united, were most alarming, and the belief was becoming prevalent that both generals would be sacrificed. The cloud was dispelled—the name of Wool was glorified throughout the land, and the presidency itself was deemed an inadequate reward for the services of Gen. Taylor; but the brightest colors will fade with time, and when the public taste becomes vitiated, the most glorious works of art will be put out of sight. In many of the later accounts of the battle of Buena Vista, the name of Wool is scarcely mentioned, and in some it might seem somewhat doubtful whether he was in it!

From the official reports of the day, the writer endeavored to frame a true narrative of the transactions in which Gen. Wool was concerned, and consequently to describe at length the events, incidents, and circumstances of the battle of Buena Vista. While endeavoring to extract the truth from a multitude of official reports, documents, letters, histories, biographies of Gen. Taylor, &c., he lost his way in the labyrinth, and was in a state of utter perplexity. Instead of one, he found a succession of battles, and it was impossible to ascertain at what time each occurred: it was necessary to ascertain the time, in order to free some of the transactions of the day from the obscurity which enveloped them. Under these circumstances, the writer took the liberty of applying to Gen. Wool for the facts, and he did not hesitate to supply them; but he furnished no more than the simple facts, without coloring or exaggeration. He gave no opinions, and neither praised or censured any one. His recollection of the facts appeared perfect, and for the most part were corroborated by statements in the official reports. For every word of a eulogistic character, the writer alone is responsible; for Gen. Wool, although always ready to give due credit to others, without wasting his praises, is regardless of himself, and keeps from the public eye, so far as respects himself, that which in strictness the public ought to know.

In this narrative the writer has confined himself to the transactions of Gen. Wool. The story of his long and extraordinary march has been published; but it is believed that it would find an appropriate place in this narrative, as the part of a whole, and not the whole of a part. The other important transactions in which he has been engaged, may in time be laid before the public. Although, on some critical emergencies, the tide of battle was turned by his skill and valor, yet his brilliant acts were of less importance to the general interests of the military service than others of less notoriety, rendered by him as inspector general. His services in that capacity, for more than twenty-five years, it is believed, did much to prepare the army for the achievements which has added so much glory to our arms and to our country. Whether this has been so or not, we know that his duties called him from the north to the south, from the east to the west, and even to Europe. He traversed every

state and territory in the Union, by which he became acquainted with every variety of the human character, from the wigwams of the rudest savages, to the palaces of kings. Sometimes he might have been found in the Indian country, for months with no white associate excepting his staff, holding daily intercourse with savage chiefs; sometimes in the metropolis of the nation, amongst men of high renown, and in society where manners and refinement were a study; sometimes with the rough and hardy backwoodsman of the frontier, and sometimes with the marshals of France and the chivalry of Great Britain. On his tours of inspection he might have been seen in a bark canoe, piloted by a single Indian, gliding down the long, majestic rivers of the west, seeking the remote parts which he was to inspect, through vast and gloomy forests where the sound of the axe had never been heard, and living on biscuit and the chance game of the rifle. Again he might have been found, holding high banquet with the wise, the witty and learned of the land; and again the inmate of log cabins, and then of mansions of imperial splendor. Sometimes he has been seen listening to the beat of the drum at Houlton on the borders of Nova Scotia, and sometimes at the Council Bluffs, almost in sight of the Rocky mountains, the great barrier of the Pacific ocean. By the chances of war, he has been thrown amongst guerilleros and robbers, as he traversed the wild mountains and valleys of Mexico; and sometimes he has been the associate of learned and pious priests; sometimes holding talks at Indian councils, and sometimes conversing with European kings; sometimes fixing sites of forts in the forests of Maine, and then by the side of King Leopold, witnessing the operations of the highest military science of Europe, at the seige of Antwerp.

Other services, unconnected with the particular and appropriate duties of his office, were not less important than the foregoing. Two missions were intrusted to him, the success of which depended more on personal address than military force. By his energy and peculiar art of conciliation, without military force, he restrained and pacified 20,000 Cherokees, who would have plunged headlong into a war, which would have desolated the frontiers of North Carolina, Georgia, Tennessee and Alabama, and have left nothing but blackened ruins and hearth-stones smoking with blood. On the northern boundary of Vermont, and the northeastern border of New York, by indomitable energy and superlative tact, he kept back his own countrymen, who, regardless of all neutral and national obligations, mad with enthusiasm and an ill-directed sympathy for persons engaged, as they thought, in a struggle for liberty, would have heedlessly rushed into another war with Great Britain, without any national object to gain, or any national injury to avenge.

Such are the rich materials from which a biography might be constructed, which, in interest, would transcend many of "the lives" recorded by Plutarch, the great biographer of Greece and Rome.

On the 15th day of May, 1846, Brigadier General Wool received an order from the Secretary of War, to repair without delay to Washington. On the same day, he left his head-quarters at Troy in the state of New York, for Washington, where he soon arrived, and reported himself to the general-in-chief and the secretary. After a few days consultation on various subjects connected with the approaching campaign in Mexico,

he received orders which were dated on the 30th of May, to repair to the city of Cincinnati for the purpose of organizing and mustering into service the volunteers required by the President from the several states of Kentucky, Tennessee, Ohio, Indiana, Illinois and Mississippi. In obedience to this order, he proceeded by the way of Troy and the western lakes, and traveling day and night, reached Columbus, the capital of the state of Ohio, on the 5th of June; and after a conference with the governor of Ohio, reached Cincinnati on the following day (June 6th), and commenced his duties by opening a correspondence with the several governors on whom requisitions had been made; and with Colonels Croghan and Churchill, the inspector-general, and other staff-officers of the army, he spared no effort to expedite the assembling of the volunteers, and in preparing them for service. The Ohio volunteers assembled so rapidly and in such numbers at Cincinnati, that there was some delay in getting them ready to be mustered into the service of the United States by the state authorities. To expedite the organization, Gen. Wool offered his special services to the governor. From the 10th of June, till the middle of July, the general was incessantly employed in preparing the forces which had been called out from six western states for the campaign to Mexico. With the enthusiasm peculiar to the sons of the west, the volunteers were rushing to each appointed rendezvous in the several states, in numbers exceeding the requisitions, and much embarrassment occurred in disposing of the surplus. When all were equally anxious to engage in the projected enterprize, it seemed somewhat ungracious to reject any.

The general was compelled to carry on a laborious correspondence with the governors of six states, with the several colonels of regiments, and many subordinate officers. One day he might be found at Cincinnati, another at Louisville, then at St. Louis, Memphis and Alton. The impatient volunteers had little knowledge of the vexations in preparing for a distant campaign in an enemy's country. Their spirits were too fiery to await quietly the tardy movements of the war department; but the general was firm in the resolution that they should not rush headlong to the scene of danger, unless brought to some state of consistency, and supplied with every thing necessary for their efficiency. The invasion of a distant and foreign country with armies disciplined and trained in wars for years, commanded by a multitude of generals, all priding themselves in their soldiership, was very different from a hunting expedition, or a hasty excursion against Indians, in which a rifle, a horn of powder, and a few dozen bullets might suffice each man. "It is impossible," said the general in a communication to the war department, "for the volunteers to get along without experienced staff-officers. They know nothing about the service. I assure you we have few among them that know any thing about any duty which appertains to furnishing supplies. From the colonel down, they do not know what they want, or what is necessary for the comfort of the troops, or to make them efficient for the field. I have been obliged, in anticipation, to supply all their wants."

The General gave himself no rest: he was compelled to perform duties which really appertained to subordinate officers of various departments. He kept a vigilant and almost sleepless eye over every branch

of the service, from the artillery department down to the nosebags of the horses and the medicines of the hospitals. During the revolutionary war, such an amount of actual labor was never thrown on a general officer. He was compelled to listen, and did listen with patience, to the countless complaints of the volunteers, and endeavoured as far as possible to redress them if well founded, and in all cases to soothe and keep them in good humour. In restraining the ebullitions of a temper naturally fiery and impatient, he discovered great forbearance and self command. Familiar with every branch of military service in all its details, the address and management with which he encountered the difficulties that beset him, discovered an accurate knowledge of human nature, and of the mode of reconciling the most independent and the most refractory spirits, but little accustomed to restraint, and to the subordination of the camp. The volunteers soon learned that he was not one to be dallied with, and that in all things where he had the right to command, he would be obeyed: he was no trifler, and they soon were convinced that he exacted nothing but what was just; and if he refused indulgencies to them, he allowed none to himself. Even his reputation as a severe disciplinarian did not extinguish the desire to serve under his command; for they were well assured that when opportunities occurred, he would give full play to their enterprise and martial spirit.

On the 11th of July, General Wool was instructed by the Secretary of War to turn over his command to General Butler, and apply himself altogether to the concentration of the forces at San Antonio de Bexar in Texas; to which command he was assigned, and from which place the government had determined to direct an expedition against the city of Chihuahua in the interior of Mexico; and Gen. Wool immediately proceeded to Alton in Illinois, for the purpose of preparing and getting off two Illinois regiments of volunteers destined for that expedition.

Gen. Wool expressed his dissatisfaction to the Secretary of War, that the destination of the Kentucky regiment and Tennessee mounted men, which he had prepared for service, and which were better prepared than any of the regiments sent to Texas or elsewhere, had been changed. "The change," said he, "surprises me. The regiments previously designated as a part of my command, were anxious to serve under my orders, and expressed dissatisfaction that there should be any doubt as to their commander or destination. Now the work is done, and most of the regiments on their way to the frontier of Mexico, Major General Butler is ordered to relieve me in the superintendence of mustering the troops, and sending them to their places of destination. He may have to order off some two or three regiments; to get the troops ready for their distant service, has required my unceasing exertions day and night."

In less than six weeks, Gen. Wool had prepared and mustered into service more than 12,000 volunteers, and a large portion of them were then on the way to join General Taylor on the Rio Grande, and afterwards constituted the principal part of his particular command, and nearly the whole when Gen. Scott withdrew the regulars. About 1700 of these volunteers were ordered to rendezvous at San Antonio de Bexar in Texas, to form part of Gen. Wool's column. Nothing but a constitution as vigorous as his could have borne up, with so little suffering,

against the vast labor of preparing such a body of men for service. "With few officers who have been exceedingly active and efficient," said he," in a letter to the adjutant general, "I have had to provide by purchase or otherwise, for all the regiments sent off, tents, haversacks, knapsacks, canteens, mess-pans, kettles, nosebags, forage bags, wagons, horses, harness, and mules for their transportation."

On the evening of the 15th of July, General Wool reached Alton, the rendezvous of the 1st and 2nd Illinois regiments, commanded by Colonel Hardin, formerly a distinguished representative in the Congress of the United States, and by Colonel Bissell, so recently conspicuous in the same body for eloquence and ability.

On the 17th of July, the General left Alton, and proceeded down the Mississippi. The Illinois regiments followed. On the 26th, he reached New Orleans, where he remained no longer than to give orders to procure whatever wagons, horses, mules, munitions, and other supplies necessary for the column, of which he was to take the command. He then proceeded to Lavaca in Texas, where the Illinois volunteers, ordered to the rendezvous at San Antonio, were to disembark; and arrived on the 1st of August, where he remained until the 8th, superintending the disembarcation of the troops; and on his departure, left instructions to promptly forward the supplies as fast as they should arrive. When he reached Placedorus creek, he reviewed the Illinois regiments. They had been delayed in their encampment, by the incessant rains, which had inundated the whole country, and rendered it impassable. The general, who was deprived of the services of Lieutenant McDowell, his active and efficient aid-de-camp, who had been so seriously injured by a fall from his horse as to prevent him from leaving Lavaca, proceeded with only two staff officers, a paymaster and ordnance officer, and arrived at San Antonio on the 14th of August. On the next day (15th), he wrote to General Taylor, "I find," said he, "neither men, munition, nor means of transportation, which, to a certain extent, it was confidently believed would have preceded me. If the troops under Colonel Harney had been here, it was my intention to have proceeded at once to the Rio Grande, to select a point near the Presidio for the establishment of a depot."

General Wool found himself compelled, for the want of staff officers, to perform the duties of quarter master, and to collect supplies from the surrounding country for the troops, whose arrival was daily expected, and to make provision for the protection of the frontier of Texas, which was sorely suffering from the incursions and depredations of the Indians. His measures to protect the Mexicans, as well as Texans, living within the limits of Texas, now under the protection of the United States, were prompt and efficient. He compelled the Indians to surrender all whom they had seized and carried into captivity, including women and children. By this course he reconciled the Mexicans to the American rule; and when they ascertained that the General was not only willing, but able to protect them, their gratitude was unbounded.

During the month of August the two Illinois regiments arrived, and also Col. Churchill (the Inspector General). Captain Fraser of the Corps of Engineers, Captain Cross (assistant quarter master), Colonel Harney with a squadron of dragoons, two companies of the 1st Dragoons com-

manded by Captains Steen and Eustis, and two companies of the 6th U. S. Infantry under the command of Major Bonneville. The last four companies marched 700 miles in six weeks, and arrived in fine order. Colonel Yell, with the Arkansas cavalry, arrived on the 28th of August. The troops, with the exception of the dragoons, were encamped at a beautiful and delightful spot, three miles above the Alamo, which was called Camp Crockett. The pure and limpid waters of the stream of San Antonio, which gushed from rocks at a short distance from the camp, ran along its front. The hills were covered with a fine growth of muskeet (live oak) and oak trees. The country was a rolling prairie, abounding in grass, from which sufficient feed for the horses, cattle, &c., was obtained. The general spared no pains to make his army efficient. He rose early, and retired late; he indulged in no amusements, but devoted every hour, except the few in which he sought some rest by sleep, to the service; and by incessant exertion, he began by degrees to form the excellent but inchoate materials of the column, which he was to lead into Mexico, into shape and consistency.

In making reconnoisances through the surrounding country, the general discovered some magnificent traces of the labors of the Jesuits. In a letter to a friend, he says, "The country is exceedingly beautiful. Most of it, however, is prairie, with live oak trees scattered over it, and an abundance of the prickly pear. The city of Antonio has the appearance of a fortified town. Most of the houses are built of stone, or with mud plastered with a lime cement, which gives it the appearance of stone." He also visited two ancient churches, one at a distance of two, the other six miles from the city. On these buildings, immense sums had been expended; and near the last, a town with a population of 10,000 souls had once existed; but all was now desolate and without inhabitants, excepting a very few, living in mud huts. "The San Antonio river," says one of the engineers, "has its source in a large spring about five miles north of the town. It becomes almost at once, gushing from the rocks, a noble river, clear, full and rapid in its course."

The appearance of the country, and the ruins, after the long march through the uninhabited wilderness between Lavaca and San Antonio, made a deep impression on the minds of the officers. The Jesuits had established themselves in this once beautiful, but now desolate country; but their magnificent churches, monasteries and nunneries, "once the outposts of christianity, were now moss-covered ruins." After the expulsion of the Jesuits, every thing went to decay. Agriculture, learning, the mechanic arts, shared the common fate; and when the banners of the United States were unfurled in these distant and desolate places, the descendants of the noble and chivalric Castilians had sunk to the level, perhaps beneath it, of the aboriginal savages; but it is to be hoped that the advent of the Saxo-Norman may brighten, in some degree, the faded splendor of the race which has fallen. "Yet this country," says one of the engineers, "bears evidence of having been at one period in a high state of cultivation and fertility, supporting a large and concentrated population. The stately and melancholy ruins of the missions of the Alamo, Conception, San Juan, Espado, and San Jose monastic fortresses, attest their former magnificence and grandeur."

The country around San Antonio, notwithstanding the general decay of agriculture, produced grass in great abundance, on which immense herds of cattle were feeding, and the Americans found no difficulty in obtaining supplies of forage and beef.

The force assigned to General Wool's column consisted of 622 regulars of the various arms, including Washington's battery, five companies of the 1st and 2d dragoons, and three companies of infantry under Major Bonneville; two regiments of volunteers from Illinois, commanded by Colonels Hardin and Bissell; and one from Arkansas, commanded by Col. Yell. The volunteer regiments numbered 2,339. Colonel Churchill, inspector of the regular army, was directed to accompany the expedition. Yell was then a representative in the Congress of the United States.

General Wool, after his arrival at San Antonio, took great pains to obtain information from all quarters respecting the most practicable route to Chihuahua. His informants concurred in their accounts, which were discouraging; and the general had the prospect before him of a long, circuitous, and most toilsome march. It was universally represented that a chain of mountains on the west of the Rio Grande stretched from Monclova to the Passo del Norte, far north of San Antonio, rendering his access between those two points to Chihuahua almost impossible; and, if the mountains could be penetrated or surmounted, they said the whole country on the other side as far as Chihuahua consisted of immense arid plains, intersected by mountainous ridges, nearly uninhabited, destitute of grass and nearly destitute of water, from which no supplies of forage or provisions could be gleaned. At any rate, he would be compelled to proceed by the road east of the mountains as far as Santa Rosa, before a single opening could be found, and all attempts to force a passage would be found utterly impracticable.

With such cheerless prospects before him, General Wool ordered a part of his force, under Col. Harney, being 1300 strong, to commence on the 26th day of September, 1846, preceded by topographical engineers under the able and efficient Captain Hughes, to examine and explore the route of this now so celebrated march. He followed on the 29th, and overtook his advance column on the 1st of October. The means of transportation, as yet, had not been provided for any great number. Colonels Churchill, Hardin, and Bissell were to follow with the remainder, whenever those means should have been provided; a sandy barren country, without roads or bridges, and furnishing in many places nothing but bad and brackish water. On the 8th of October he reached the Rio Grande, having been but eleven days on the march; it being accomplished in this time by the aid of the indefatigable exertions of those distinguished officers Captains Lee and Frazier, of the corps of engineers, they having prepared the way with a pioneer company, by leveling hills, filling ravines, making bridges, &c. On the approach of the troops, the enemy, some two hundred strong, under the command of a colonel, without firing a gun, retired in the direction of Monclova.

The Rio Grande, sometimes called the Rio Bravo del Norte, was, at the place where it arrested the march of the Americans, 270 yards wide, and flowing with a rapid current. By means of a flying bridge, prepared at San Antonio by Captain Frazer, the passage of the army, with

its immense train of artillery, military stores, provisions, and baggage, was accomplished in three days, without the slightest accident; and on the 11th the Americans found themselves in an enemy's country.

General Wool, on his arrival, published the following order:

"Soldiers! After a long and tedious march, you have arrived on the banks of the Rio Grande. In the performance of this service, the commanding general has witnessed, with the greatest pleasure, your patience, good order and perseverance under many deprivations and hardships. All have done their duty, and in a manner that reflects the highest credit on both officers and men. From this remark he would not except his staff, who had actively and zealously devoted themselves to the service; whilst Captain Cross had been eminently successful in forwarding his long train of supplies, without delay or serious accident.

"To-morrow you will cross the Rio Grande, and occupy the territory of our enemies. We have not come here to make war upon the people or peasantry of the country, but to compel the government of Mexico to render justice to the United States. The people, therefore, who do not take up arms against the United States, and remain quiet and peaceful at their homes, will not be molested or interfered with, either as regards their persons or property; and all those who furnish supplies will be treated kindly, and whatever is received from them will be liberally paid for.

"It is expected of the troops that they will observe the most rigid discipline and subordination. All depredations on the persons or property of the people of the country are strictly forbidden; and every soldier or follower of the camp, who may so far forget his duty as to violate these injunctions, will be severely punished."

After leaving Captain Frazer with orders to erect works on each bank of the river to protect the passage, when Colonels Hardin, Churchill and Bissell, and Major Borland, with the remainder of the column, should arrive, and posting two companies there, the general moved forward to the Mexican village of San Juan Baptiste, generally known by the name of Presidio, and found no resistance.

There were no specie funds in the quartermaster's department or the commissariat, and treasury notes were not current in Mexico. Some difficulty occurred in obtaining supplies; but the general, by his address, and the great efficiency of Captain Cross, assistant quartermaster, overcame it, and his troops, who were obliged to wait until the train was repaired, were amply supplied.

The neighboring country as far as Nava, like that around San Antonio, had once been under the ministration of the Jesuits, and, by irrigation, its productions were abundant. In the vicinity of the Presidio, where the practice of irrigation had not altogether ceased, the soil was productive in maize, wheat, sweet potatoes, and garden vegetables: cotton, sugar cane, figs, oranges, peaches, and other fruits and forage were abundant. On the march to Nava, which was distant from the Presidio twenty-six miles, a country was opened, once productive and capable by irrigation of maintaining a numerous population, but which had become a dreary waste, without a human habitation, and destitute of water. Buildings were fast mouldering into ruins; the magnificent dwelling of

the Jesuit had shared the common ruin, and the bleak winds howled through its long, open passages. However odious the doctrines and practices of the Jesuits, they have left vestiges of their beneficence in some of the wildest spots of North America, and under their improving hands the desert was made to blossom as the rose. San Juan de Nava was situated in the middle of a wide and level plain, and exhibited few marks of its former prosperity. The plain was once highly cultivated, but it was now almost a barren waste. The town was in a state of desolation, and three-quarters of its houses were uninhabited. The poverty-stricken inhabitants were in a state of deplorable ignorance and slothfulness; they had, indeed, in arts, industry and civilization, sunk below the grade of the Indians. When the Jesuits were expelled from those remote places, in which they were willing to abide and devote themselves to the education of the Spaniards, the civilization of the Indians and the cultivation of the soil, no care was taken by the wretched government of the viceroys to supply their places; everything went to decay, and the deterioration was common to the land and its inhabitants.

General Wool, after obtaining some corn and forage, proceeded on his march. A few miles west of Nava a grove of surpassing beauty was discovered, called by the Mexicans El Arborlado de los Angelos, the grove of the angels; and this grove was watered by a spring. This spot, on which nature had lavished so much beauty, was held in mysterious reverence by the people of Nava. The polished Greeks and Romans had their consecrated groves, and the barbarian druids of France and England selected the deep shades of a dark grove to carry on their horrible worship. The first appealed to the sense of beauty, the last to terror: both understood the secret workings of the human heart; and in this lonely spot the ancient superstition, extinguished in Europe, was kept alive.

San Fernando de Rosas, which Wool's army next approached, was a beautiful city, environed by trees, and nearly surrounded by a stream of clear water. White buildings, gleaming through the dark green foliage, presented a lively and pleasant contrast. Two plazas, or great squares, were surrounded with the tasteful dwellings of opulent citizens; and the church, with its dome and cross, was seen towering over the whole. The city stood on a fertile plain, and the soldiers' eyes were refreshed with a scene of beauty which seldom occurred in the line of march; for, as yet, they had seen but little besides squalid poverty, ruined buildings, and other desolation. Not the least sign of hostile feeling was evinced by the inhabitants of the city, nor even a desponding look; their deportment was friendly and cordial, and they readily furnished all the supplies which were required. So delightful was the place, and so friendly the people, that the Americans regretted the necessity which compelled them to leave it.

When the march was recommenced, the column soon reached a different region, consisting of broken and barren lands with lofty mountains on either hand; and in front the mountains of San Jose appeared, presenting apparently an insurmountable barrier to their further progress; but, as they advanced, a succession of valleys, through which the road wound, discovered that the route, if difficult, was practicable. The

scenery at every step was more and more wild, picturesque, and sublime; and the general and many of his officers, who possessed a taste for the beautiful and sublime in nature, found some alleviations for their fatigues, cares and anxieties, in gazing on this stupendous scenery. At length the elevated summit of the mountain road was attained, and a prospect burst on the view, "whose magnificence," says one of the officers who accompanied the expedition, "it is impossible to describe." Toward the east," he continued, "we looked down on the widely extended plain over which we had so long been journeying. In the distance, the grove of San Fernando was still visible; while at our feet the valley of Santa Rita lay like a map, with the winding course of the river distinctly traced upon it by the dark line of foliage that fringes its banks. On either hand the peaks of the range, upon which we then stood, became less and less as they became more removed in prospective, until, in the far off blue, their outlines faded from our sight, and mingled with the faint undulations of the surrounding horizon; while in the west, the Sierra de Santa Rosa ascended like a huge and battlemented wall, with its serrated crest jutting aloft in strong relief against the clear sky, and its precipitous sides hung about with festoons of white and purple clouds."

On their descent from this elevation, the column pursued a winding march through a gorge, and reached an immense plain, called by the Mexicans the Llano de San Jose, which extended to the base of the Sierra de Santa Rosa, a distance of thirty miles. Midway in the plain, obstacles were presented which had not been anticipated. Two rivers, only three miles apart, called the Alamos and Sabinos, ran directly through the plain, intercepting their march. Each river was about sixty yards wide and four feet deep, with currents as rapid as torrents. There were neither boats or bridges, or the means to construct them, and horses and mules could keep no footing in currents so rapid; but the energy and mechanical ingenuity of Americans are equal to almost every exigency of this kind, and they contrived to pass the horses, mules, cannon, and two hundred heavily laden wagons over both rivers with trifling loss, and the march was continued, without encountering any further obstructions, to the city of Santa Rosa, at the foot of the mountains of that name, which the general entered with his whole force, without resistance, on the 24th day of October, and was cordially received, and his army well supplied.

General Wool was now at the foot of that chain of mountains which he must penetrate, or turn, to reach Chihuahua. The information he received before he commenced his march was fully corroborated. Two mule trains led through the mountains, but were impracticable to the passage of artillery, or even wagons; and beyond was a country which, for ninety miles, afforded not a drop of water. To attempt the passage by such routes would have been a species of madness unknown in the military annals of the world since the days of Cambyses and Crassus; he therefore came to the resolution of keeping the road which led through Monclova to Parras where he would intersect the great road leading from Saltillo to Chihuahua, over which he ascertained the practicability of leading an army

Santa Rosa was once a place of considerable importance, as some rich veins of silver ore had been discovered in its vicinity; but all enter-

prize was paralyzed by civil dissensions. The works had been abandoned; but at the time of the arrival of the army, an American had commenced operations at the mines, which promised to be successful.

General Wool now determined his line of March, and resolved to proceed to Parras. He directed his course through the valley which separated the two mountainous chains of Santa Rosa and San Jose. This valley was barren and nearly uninhabited, except by a few shepherds who watched over flocks of sheep and goats, whose scanty food was gleaned from the valley and the mountain side. As the army proceeded, the barrenness augmented, and at length little was found except the agave, from which the Mexicans manufacture a favorite liquor called *pulque*. Still the mountain scenery was grand and imposing, and, according to the account of the officer of whom mention has been previously made, "unequalled." "Many was the picture presented to us," says he, "where the sight of long ranges and groups of mountains, with their precipitous sides, now in deep shadow, now standing sharply out in the bright sunlight, would have filled with ecstacy a Salvator Rosa."

At the Passo de las Hermanas an extensive hacienda was found, the proprietor of which was the Senor Miguel Blanco. He was one of the principal citizens of the state of Coahuili, and was profuse in his hospitalities to the American officers. From this pass the army entered the great valley of Monclova; and crossing it on the 29th of October, encamped before the city, containing seven thousand inhabitants.

Hitherto not the slightest symptom of a spirit hostile to the Americans had been manifested by the Mexicans; and Gen. Wool, acting in accordance with the sentiments expressed in his proclamation when he entered the country, had not treated them as enemies. He had subjected them to no humiliations, neither had he required a formal surrender of their towns and cities, and asked for nothing but supplies of forage and provisions, for which he promised ample compensation, and amply redeemed his promise. The people found a better market for their productions than they had ever found before, and were sattsfied. The barbarians of the north were their best customers, and they were well disposed to continue the trade. "Thus far," said General Wool in a public despatch, "the towns on our route have received us kindly, and readily furnished us with corn and other supplies;" but at Monclova, a different, but not an obstinate hostile spirit, had been manifested. The authorities of the city "had protested against his advance upon it," and had furnished large supplies to the Mexican army. These circumstances induced the General to take formal possession of the city; and on the 3d of November he entered it with all his forces, and elevated the American flag on the governor's palace, which he made his head quarters. He established a depot of provisions, and seized 10,000 lbs. of flour, which he ascertained had been collected for the Mexican army. Notwithstanding this exercise of the military authority, he succeeded in conciliating the inhabitants, and Mexicans and Americans freely mingled in the festivals and balls which followed the occupation of the city.

At this place he received a communication from Gen. Taylor, advising him of the armistice which he had concluded with Gen. Ampudia, after

the capture of Monterey, and instructing him not to advance in the direction of Saltillo until its expiration. Colonel Churchill joined him there with the remainder of his column, which he led from San Antonio, well supplied, and with a train of one hundred wagons.

Gen. Wool remained at Monclova until the expiration of the armistice, which included a period of twenty-seven days; and during the whole time devoted himself incessantly to his military duties in training the troops, perfecting their discipline, reconnoitering the country, and in gaining information respecting the movements of the enemy. After a careful and scrutinizing investigation of the various reports, he was convinced that Santa Anna was concentrating a large army at San Louis de Potosi, and that all the troops had been withdrawn from Chihuahua.

On the 1st of November, General Wool wrote to General Taylor, then at Monterey, respecting the state of his army, which, with the exception of some companies poorly clad, he represented as being in fine condition. "Although," said he, "we have met with obstacles almost insurmountable, I have succeeded in bringing my command to this place, without any loss worth mentioning. The men are in high spirits, and ready for any service I may require of them." After alluding to the order of General Taylor, by which he would be detained at Monclova until the 19th, he continues, "As I believe, from all that I can learn, the only practicable route I can take to reach Chihuahua is in the direction of Saltillo, until within ten or fifteen leagues from that place, when the road turns to the right for Chihuahua through Parras. In pursuing this route to our point of destination, would it violate the armistice? Allow me to ask what is to be gained by going to Chihuahua? For aught that I can learn, all that we shall find to conquer is distance. I understand the people of that city are no better prepared to defend themselves than I have found them in the Presidio, Nava, San Fernando, Santa Rosa, and this place. At neither of these places was any resistance offered; on the contrary, from the appearance and professions, except at this place, the people were glad to see us, and readily supplied the troops with whatever they had to dispose of. Although the people of Monclova did not receive us with as much cheerfulness as the people of the other towns through which we have passed, they have not hesitated to bring in the supplies of the country. From all that I can learn, it would seem that the only preparation making to resist our arms is at San Luis Potosi, and on the coast of the gulf of Mexico. If any reliance can be placed on assertions, reports, &c., it would appear that the whole available force of Mexico is to be concentrated at San Luis. Under these circumstances I should be glad to join your forces, and take part in *conquering a peace* at San Luis; and for that purpose I should be much gratified if you would give me authority, at the proper time, to take possession of Saltillo, or any other position you may deem most advisable. In making this request, you must not suppose I am not prepared to carry out all the objects or intentions of the president; on the contrary, I am disposed to do all that man can do to carry out his views, and force Mexico to make such a peace as would conduce to the honor and interest of the United States. This can only be done at San Luis Potosi, or some other place on the road to Mexico, and not at Chihuahua, which is already conquered. My

column is efficient, and will do good service; and be assured that the whole, and particularly myself, are most anxious to co-operate with you to bring about a peace, if you have not already done it at Monterey." General Wool concluded by observing that a victory at San Luis Potosi would settle the question, as Mexico had certainly concentrated all her forces in that quarter. "Why," he asked, "should you separate your forces, when no possible good can result from it? The position at Saltillo or Parras would as effectually conquer Chihuahua, as the actual possession of that place."

On the 4th of November, General Wool reiterated these opinions in a letter to Adjutant General Jones, at Washington.

On the 12th of November, he again wrote to General Taylor that he was well convinced if Parras was occupied by his column, a small detachment would be sufficient for the reduction of Chihuahua; and then the main body would be at his disposal, either to join his forces or take any other position he might deem necessary, and he expressed his belief that Santa Anna intended to give battle at San Luis Potosi.

On the next day (13th), he wrote that he was ready to resume his onward march; and as it was impossible to protect a line of nearly 600 miles in length, along which his supplies were brought, he had "cut the cord," by ordering the companies stationed along the route for the purpose of protecting the supplies, to rejoin the main body. He thought he could obtain supplies with little difficulty from the country itself.

Rendered impatient by his long detention at Monclova, and the uncertainty of his ultimate destination, and also aware of the ill effects of continued inaction on raw soldiers, who, unless stimulated by novelties, lose all animation, and to rid themselves of a sluggishness which a succession of monotonous weeks may bring upon them, are too apt to run into excesses, impairing their efficiency as soldiers, General Wool sent his able and efficient aid-de-camp, Lieutenant McDowell, to General Taylor's camp, to make personal explanations as to the state of his command. Lieut. McDowell also bore a letter to Major Bliss, the assistant adjutant general of General Taylor, dated November 19th. "I hope," said General Wool, "the general will not permit me to remain in my present position one moment longer than it is absolutely necessary. Inaction is exceedingly injurious to volunteers. It is extremely difficult to confine them to drill whilst stationary. Volunteer officers will give their men permission to be absent, and consequently the men get into difficulties and broils with the inhabitants. I have thus far succeeded extremely well in controlling the volunteers. No serious depredations have yet been committed; although from the various efforts made to get up an excitement between the soldiers and inhabitants, I find it difficult to restrain them."

This communication was concluded in these earnest and emphatic terms: "I have to urge that you will submit this communication to the general. If he is not present, send it forward with my aid-de-camp to his head quarters, in order that he may receive from him such instructions as he intends to give me, and particularly to designate the part I am to play in the great drama. I trust we shall not remain here longer than to receive an answer from the general. *Delays are dangerous* This is the favorable time for operating against the enemy. Take tim

by the forelock, and push on before the enemy collects too large a force to bring against us. Urge the general to concentrate his forces. Do not allow the enemy to beat us in detail. In conclusion, I repeat, urge the general not to leave us here. Go we must; and when an opportunity occurs, we will do good service."

General Wool resumed his march on the 24th November, leaving a force of two hundred and fifty men under the command of Major Warren of the 1st Illinois volunteers, to guard the depot of Monclova, and the indefatigable and efficient officer Captain Patrick, to procure additional supplies for his column. The second day after he left Monclova, he met Captain McDowell returning from General Taylor's headquarters. He brought a communication from the general, by which General Wool received notice that the Chihuahua expedition was abandoned, and orders to occupy Parras, the distance between the latter place and Monclova being 180 miles; and on the march he passed through Castena, Marquese, Bagan, La Joya, Junta de Estamosa, Puenta de Reala, Jarel, San Antonio, Teneja, Cienaga, Grande, Galera and Ojurlos, and, afte meeting obstacles difficult to overcome, he encamped before Parras on the 5th of December.

The city of Parras contained about 8000 inhabitants. A vigorous and protracted defence might have been made. The position was important. On the rear the city abutted on a high range of mountains; the streets were narrow, the buildings of stone and surrounded by high walls. It was within 100 miles of Saltillo, and 150 of Monterey; and it was considered the key of Chihuahua, although 450 miles intervened. It was in the centre of the best grain producing country in Mexico, although its immediate vicinity was covered by extensive vineyards, producing delicious grapes, from which wine and brandy were manufactured. It was a delightful country, and in its delicious climate the American soldiers found a temporary relaxation after their long and severe labors. Provisions could have been obtained in sufficient abundance to supply the armies of Taylor and Wool.

The conciliatory course pursued by General Wool won the hearts of the people of Parras, and they could hardly regard him, from his mild conduct, as an enemy; yet to his own soldiers, in all matters relating to discipline and the regulation of the camp, the general was stern and inflexible, so much so that many complained that he was harsh and severe. The rule of General Wool over his soldiers, if severe, was just and impartial. He feared none, and wronged none. He was resolute in duty, and fearless of consequences.

On the 5th of December, General Wool issued a proclamation, addressed to the people of Parras and vicinity, in the following words:

" In taking military possession of the town of Parras, the undersigned, a general in the armies of the United States, seizes the occasion to state briefly to its inhabitants, and those of the surrounding country, the principles by which he is guided in his military operations in the republic of Mexico, and the line of conduct prescribed to its citizens.

" The war, on the part of the United States, is not against the people of Mexico. It is a forcible demand on the government of Mexico for satisfaction for a long series of wrongs, which have been borne patiently, and hitherto without redress. In this contest, the United States desire

that their armies should carefully distinguish between the people and the government. If the former remain neutral, and do not take up arms or conspire directly or indirectly against the forces of the United States, at the same time furnish the latter with such supplies as may be required, they will not only be respected and protected in their persons and property, in their political rights and in their religious faith, but paid a reasonable (not exceeding the customary) price for all supplies of the country that may be required for the American troops.

"In conformity to the line of conduct here prescribed, it is to be distinctly understood that the citizens of Parras and the surrounding country are to give no aid to the Mexican army, either by intelligence, money, munitions of war, or any other supplies.

"It is permitted to all citizens to pursue their usual avocations; but they are prohibited from sending any article of traffic, products or supplies of any kind, to any other part of the country, without the sanction and authority of the undersigned. At the same time all persons desiring to leave the town for any of the distant towns in Mexico, will not leave without the same authority; and all persons arriving in Parras from any distant town, will immediately report in person to head quarters.

"To those who depart from the conduct here prescribed, and who, under the disguise of neutrality, hold intercourse with, or afford assistance to the Mexican arms, harsh measures must be applied, and the penalties due to treachery rigidly enforced."

"John E. Wool, Brigadier General."

Soon after General Wool's arrival before Parras, he received orders from General Taylor to procure provisions for five thousand men of the army of occupation. In order to ascertain how far these orders could be complied with, he set about collecting information on the subject. For this purpose, and to gain information of the future operations of Santa Anna, who, he was well satisfied was organizing and disciplining a large army at San Luis de Potosi, he sent reconnoitering parties throughout that section of country. Among others, Captain Hughes, with a party of mounted men, was sent a hundred or more miles on the Durango road, to gain information and explore the country. General Wool soon became satisfied that the supplies required could be obtained, and so informed General Taylor. He was, however, prevented from carrying into effect his arrangements with the inhabitants of the country, by information, from the veteran and gallant General Worth, of the approach to his position at Saltillo, of Santa Anna, at the head of the grand army of Mexico, and who at the same time urged General Wool to hasten to his assistance, he having but nine hundred effective troops. As General Wool had received orders from General Taylor, in case Worth should be menaced by a superior force, to repair to his position and assume command of all the troops, he did not hesitate to comply with his request. Accordingly in two hours and a half after he received Worth's communication, his column was in motion, with its immense train of 350 wagons loaded with ammunition, quarter-master's and hospital stores for a year's campaign, and sixty day's rations for his whole command. Only fourteen soldiers of his column were unable to march. They were too sick to be moved, and were left by Captain Hoffman in charge of the inhabitants of Parras. The ladies of the city contended for the privi-

lege of nursing and providing for their comforts; so thoroughly had the general, who appeared amongst them as an enemy and invader, conciliated the good will of the people by his kind treatment and forbearance. These soldiers were all returned to General Wool in good health, without any expense to the United States.

General Wool's column and train, excepting Captain Hoffman's company and Captain Hughes' party, who followed two days after, left its encampment before Parras at half past four o'clock P. M. on the 17th; and on the 21st of December, at one o'clock P. M., encamped at Agua Nueva (via La Encantada), twenty-one miles in advance of Saltillo, on the great road leading from that place to San Luis de Potosi, and between General Worth and Santa Anna; the whole distance marched being 120 miles, through a country without roads or bridges. As General Wool remarked, in a letter to a friend: " It was a march that could not have been accomplished without the most determined perseverance by both officers and men. Every one of the staff, as well as of the line, regulars and volunteers, did their duty—their whole duty. All were animated by the same spirit, feeling, and action, lest they should be too late to meet the avalanche that was to overwhelm the gallant Worth."

On the second day of his march, General Wool encamped at Patos, forty miles from Saltillo. Here he obtained forage for his mules and horses, and such supplies as he needed. He, together with his suite, were invited to dine at a hacienda belonging to Senor Jacopo Sanchez, where they were received with the most cordial hospitality, and partook of an excellent dinner. Captain Sanchez, a nephew of the proprietor, challenged the general to a game of chess; the stakes being the conquest of Mexico, or the surrender of the American troops. Senora Sanchez, who, as well as her husband, was an ardent patriot, watched the operation of the game with the intense interest which all of the Spanish race feel on such occasions, and seemed as much excited as if the stakes were real, and that the result of the war was to be determined by the result of the game. Finding that the general was constantly gaining advantages over his antagonist, she was in despair; throwing up her hands she exclaimed, " all is lost! our knights and castles are captured." The American general gained a complete victory.*

Early on the next morning he resumed his march, and encamped at San Juan La Vacqueria, nine miles from Agua Nueva, and twenty from Saltillo. During the evening the reports were of such a character that, in connection with the information received from General Worth, General Wool was induced to believe that Santa Anna was near at hand, and that on the morning he would fall in with him between Encantado and Agua Nueva; and accordingly made his arrangements for an early march, expecting to reach the Mexicans before he reached Agua Nueva. To

*After the battle of Buena Vista, General Wool sent his compliments to Senor Jacopo, and informed him that he had played the second game of chess, and begged that it would not disturb him any more than the first. It would always afford him pleasure to be the protector of him and his family.

As a contrast between the American and Mexican officers, it is related that when Senor Jacopo invited the former to dine at his table, nothing but what was offered was taken; but that the latter, after partaking of his hospitality, relieved him of his silver plate! The history of the Mexican war is full of strange anomalies; the Mexicans of respectability were protected by their enemies, and plundered by their countrymen.

disencumber himself of part of his train, he marched by Encantado, where he found Lieutenant Kearney and Captain Lee, of General Wool's staff, who had been reconnoitering, and learned that the reports of Santa Anna's forward movement were entirely false and groundless.

Thus General Wool terminated a march of 900 miles through the heart of an enemy's country, without shedding a drop of blood. In the course of the march, his army had levelled hills, filled ravines, constructed bridges, crossed rivers difficult of passage and sandy plains, scaled mountains, and finally encamped at Agua Nueva, the advanced position of the army of occupation, in high health, scarcely losing a man on the march, and in a state of discipline which was the admiration of all military men. His column was so thorough in its appointments, that it was the model of an army: it wanted nothing; and with the means then existing, was able to keep the field a year. All this had been accomplished by unceasing vigilance, by an irresistible energy, before which the most formidable obstacles gave way; and by a system of admirable military diplomacy, which enabled the commander to feed his army from the resources of the country, and to sustain his credit by the undeviating honor which characterized his conduct in all his engagements, and the prompt manner in which he fulfilled all his stipulations. The annals of history furnish no instance of such a march as General Wool's. It is not surpassed by the march of the 10,000 Greeks under Xenophon. The Greeks were retreating, flying from danger: the Americans advancing to meet it; no disasters occurred; nothing was lost, and the army was brought out in fine condition at the termination of this stupendous march, and the military ability of the commander was too plainly manifested to be controverted. He had shed no blood, converted enemies into friends, and was in all places received as a protector rather than as a conquerer. Slander was silenced; and the restless spirit of envy, if not quelled, was quieted.

The names of the officers, as far as ascertained, who accompanied General Wool's column, and who were in the great battle of Buena Vista, are hereto appended:—

Brigadier General J. E. Wool.
Colonel S. Churchill, Inspector General.
1st Lieutenant Irwin McDowell, A. D. C.
Captain W. W. Chapman, Assistant Quartermaster.
Captain Davis, Assistant Quartermaster.
Captain Howard, Assist. Com. Subsist.
1st Lieutenant Sitgreaves, Topographical Engineers.
2d Lieutenant Franklin, " "
2d Lieutenant Francis T. Bryan, " "
1st Lieutenant C. P. Kingsbury, Ordnance.
Assistant Surgeon C. M. Hitchcock.
" " Zabriskie (volunteer).
" " Lively.
" " Price (volunteer).
" " Roane, "

First Dragoons.—Captain E. Steen, 1st Lieutenant J. H. Carleton, 1st do. R. H. Chilton, 1st do. D. H. Rucker, 2d do. A. Buford, 2d do. Joseph H. Whittlesey, 2d do. Evans.

Fourth Artillery.—Brevet Major John M. Washington, 1st Lieutenant J. P. J. O'Brien, 1st do. Thomas L. Brent, 2d do. H. M. Whiting.

Arkansas Mounted Volunteers.—Colonel Archibald Yell (killed), Lieutenant Colonel J. S. Roane, Major Borland (captured before the battle); Captains Taylor, Danley, Patrick, Porter (killed), Pike, Dillard, Hunter, W. H. Preston, Inglish, W. G. Preston.

First Illinois Regiment Volunteers.—Colonel John J. Hardin (killed), Lieutenant Colonel Weatherford, Captains Smith (wounded), Fry, Zabriskie (killed), Richardson, Montgomery, Mower, Crow, Landon.

Major Warren and Captains Morgan and Prentiss, of this regiment, were at Saltillo during the battle.

Second Illinois Regiment Volunteers.—Colonel Bissell, Lieutenant Colonel Morrison, Major Trail, Captains Coffee, Woodward (killed), Baker Wheeler (at Saltillo during the battle), Lott, Hacker (at Saltillo during the battle), Lemon, Kaith, Miller, Starbuck.

Texas Volunteers.—Captain Conner.

The names of the subalterns are not known to the writer.

The 2d dragoons, the infantry under Major Bonneville, and the company of Kentucky volunteers under Captain Williams, left before the battle, to join the army of General Scott; also Captains Cross, A. Q. M. Lee, engineers, and Hughes, top. engineers. Captain Frazer was on duty at Monterey.

On the evening of the 22d of December, General Wool left his camp at Agua Nueva, accompanied by some of his officers, and proceeded through the valley to visit Generals Butler and Worth at Saltillo. The gloom of the valley was aggravated by a dense fog; and so deep was the darkness, that the officers were frequently compelled to dismount to feel their way. They reached Saltillo at a late hour, and found Generals Butler and Worth both confined to their beds through indisposition.

On the next morning (December 23d), General Wool (having on the previous evening, 22d, had an interview with Generals Butler and Worth, and learning that the alarm of an attack from Santa Anna had subsided), accompanied only by Captain Carleton, returned to his camp. In sunlight, the valley with all its grounds, and the mountains surrounding it, was plainly visible. When they reached the pass of Angostura, Wool halted, and after viewing the ground, exclaimed, "This is the spot of all others I have yet seen in Mexico, which I should select for battle, were I obliged with a small army to fight a large one. The network of of deeply worn channels on the right will completely protect that flank, and the heights on the left will command the road; while the ravines in front, which extend back to the mountain on that side, will cripple the movements of the enemy, should he attempt to turn that flank." Wool, in his conversation, enlarged much on the superior advantages of this as a battle field. Carleton communicated his opinions to the officers at the camp, many of whom visited the spot, and all concurred in the opinion of General Wool.

On the 26th of December, General Butler having received an order to assume command at Saltillo, visited the camp at Agua Nueva; and on the 27th ordered General Wool to move his column to Encantada, and

there establish his camp.* It being understood that he was at liberty to choose his position, Wool selected the plain between the pass of Angostura and the hacienda of Buena Vista, which were a mile and a half apart; "a smooth, beautiful plain, well sheltered from the prevailing winds, with cool, delicious water in front and rear, good grazing in the vicinity, and plenty of fuel at no great distance:" with a view to the comfort of his soldiers, who would be sheltered there from the bleak winds which swept through the pass of Encantada, as well as plenty of water, and principally from its proximity to the pass of Angostura; but General Butler regarding his position too far to the rear, ordered General Wool to return with his column to Encantada. The result of all these movements was, eventually, to deprive him of most of his staff officers, wagons, supplies, and the greater part of his regular troops; thus reducing his column to a state of comparative inefficiency.

After remaining some weeks in the disagreeable encampment near Encantada, covered with dust stirred up by violent winds and whirled about in clouds, another false alarm brought General Wool to his favorite encamping ground at Buena Vista.

It suddenly became very difficult to obtain correct or positive information respecting the operations of the enemy. Under these circumstances, Major Borland (now a senator of the United States) volunteered to make a reconnaisance. Fifty picked men and horses from the Arkansas regiments were placed at his disposal; and he was instructed by General Wool to proceed, if found practicable, on the road leading to San Luis Potosi, as far as Encarnacion, 55 miles from Saltillo, and then to return and report. He reached Encarnacion, discovering no enemy; and then, agreeably to his orders, began to retrace his steps, and after moving a few miles, changed his purpose, and returned to Encarnacion to seek the enemy. On his march, he was joined by Major Gaines of the Kentucky cavalry (now governor of Oregon), who had been sent by General Butler in the same direction, with instructions similar to Borland's, but had pursued a different route. After a short consultation they determined to proceed to Salado, in search of the enemy; but so cold and stormy was the night, that it was deemed expedient to return and relinquish the search. They encamped in and about the hacienda of the Encarnacion. General Miñon being informed of the movements of the two majors, reached the hacienda in the night, and surrounded it; and in the morning, the majors finding their numbers too few to cope with the enemy, surrendered themselves, with 70 or 80 others, amongst whom were Captains Cassius M. Clay and Donley, and Lieutenant Davidson. A day or two after this disaster, Captain Meadly, with 17 men, from the Kentucky cavalry, on a reconnaisance from the Palomas pass, neglecting the necessary precautions, was surprised in the night, and captured with all his men. No resistance was made by either of these captured parties, and not a gun was fired.

* General Taylor had given orders to General Wool, that in case General Worth should be attacked, he (General Wool) should proceed to Saltillo, and assume command; and in case his own position should be menaced, he was to order General Worth to join him with his forces.

The volunteers, for the most part, were bold, hardy, enterprising and capable of great endurance. They could bear hunger and fatigue better than the restraints of discipline; and when not under the eye of the regular commanders, were too apt to neglect the precautions necessary to their own safety, and to indulge themselves according to their own humour. The disasters which befel them are not to be attributed to any lack of courage, but rather to their recklessness of danger.

On the 21st of January, Major General Butler left Saltillo on a visit to General Taylor. He did not return, but left the country for the United States. This circumstance placed the troops in and near Saltillo under the command of Brigadier General Wool, who immediately set about preparing for coming events. He ordered the gallant Brigadier General Lane, Governor and commandant of Saltillo, to concentrate the public stores, barricade the streets, and, in case the city should be attacked by the enemy, to occupy the cathedral, and the churches on its right and left. He ordered Captain Webster, of the artillery, to complete the field work commenced by Major General Butler, and to occupy it with two 24-pounder howitzers. This work overlooked the city.

Rumors were rife that General Santa Anna, with a large army, was on his way to Saltillo. These rumors were transmitted to General Taylor by General Wool, who urged the general to join him with all the force he could spare from Monterey.

On the 30th January, General Taylor, in consequence of the continued reports of the movements of the enemy, and the frequent appearance of large bodies of cavalry within striking distance of Saltillo, was induced to change his head quarters. He left Monterey on the 31st January, with Captains Sherman and Bragg's batteries (eight pieces), Lieutenant Colonal May's squadron of the 2d dragoons, and the Mississippi regiment; and on the 2d February arrived at Saltillo, where he found General Wool's command, which comprised the main body of the army, in good order.

He gave no heed to the advice of General Scott to evacuate Saltillo and fall back on Monterey. In a communication to the War Department he said, "Not to speak of the pernicious moral effect upon volunteer troops of falling back from points which we have gained, there are powerful military reasons for occupying this extremity of the pass rather than the other." The scarcity of water and supplies for a long distance in front, compels the enemy either to risk an engagement in the field, or to hold himself aloof from us; while if we fall back on Monterey, he could establish himself at Saltillo, and in position to annoy more effectually our flanks and our communications. Induced by these considerations, and to restore the confidence of the volunteers, which he says had been somewhat shaken by the late disasters, referring to the capture of Majors Borland and Gaines and their men; he established his camp, on the 5th February, at Agua Nueva, where, as he says in a letter to E. C. W. Butler, he expected to fight the Mexicans. General Wool followed on the 10th, after withdrawing General Lane and his brigade from Saltillo, and replacing them with Major Warren, a gallant officer, and four well disciplined companies of the 1st and 2nd Illinois regiments. The major was directed to follow the instructions previously given to

General Lane. Colonel Marshall, with his regiment of mounted men, stationed to guard the Palomas Pass, was relieved by Captain Pike and his squadron, and ordered to Agua Nueva.

From the 10th to the 20th of February, Captain Carleton says, "the time was diligently employed in reconnoitering the roads and approaches, and in improving our troops in drill and discipline." Gen. Taylor placed the whole camp, as well as Saltillo, under the command of General Wool. His long experience, skill and activity, peculiarly fitted him for the instruction and discipline of troops; "and each day's improvement gave evidence of his indefatigable exertions, as well as the aptness and intelligence of the volunteers, who were taught under his superintendence." General Taylor was incredulous, and slow to believe that it was the intention of Santa Anna to attack him, and seemed thoroughly persuaded that the great army which he had collected at San Luis de Potosi was designed for the defence of Vera Cruz, then threatened by a large force under the command of Major General Scott. In this opinion he remained up to almost the very moment of Santa Anna's arrival at Agua Nueva. As late as the 14th February, in a communication to the Adjutant General, he says, "Rumors reach our camp from time to time of the projected advance of a Mexican force upon this position, but I think such a movement improbable." It was, however, his determination, if the Mexican chief should attack him, to meet him at Agua Nueva.

Within his own limited sphere, Santa Anna was a person of consummate craft. He could not indeed comprehend the character of the Americans, but he thoroughly understood that of his excitable and vain-glorious countrymen, exalted or depressed beyond measure by success or defeat. Notwithstanding his defeat at San Jacinto during the Texan war, which was attributed to accident rather than incapacity, the Mexicans still regarded him their greatest soldier. He had collected around him at San Luis de Potosi all the real military force of Mexico, whom he had assiduously trained and drilled. Many of them were veterans inured to war. By his stirring proclamations and fiery addresses, he had wrought upon their passions until they became phrensied with rage against the Americans; and although he entertained no great reverence for the priests, yet they became so inflamed with zeal and bigotry against foreigners and heretics, that they preached a crusade against the modern infidels, who insolently and impiously invaded the sacred soil of Mexico and trampled on the holy cross. Exterminate the heretic and gather the spoils of the heathen, was the war cry of the camp: some of the priests were even more ferocious than the soldiers.

Santa Anna avoided Vera Cruz, where an American fleet and army were in co-operation; he chose to seek for glory in a safer place. He had little doubt that he could annihilate Taylor's army, shut up as it was in the vallies between the mountains. He knew that nearly all the regular soldiers had been withdrawn by General Scott, and the volunteers he supposed to be as inefficient as his own rancheros. He was certain of a victory; and a victory, no matter what the disparity of numbers might be, and the annihilation of an American army, would magnify him into a hero and a conquerer, and place his power on a basis too

solid to be shaken. Such were the illusions which cherished the fancy of this vain-glorious and sanguine Mexican general.

For many days in the American camp there were constant rumors of the approach of Santa Anna with a large army, some said 20,000, and others 30,000 strong. The people of Saltillo began again to desert the city, a sure index of the approach of a military force. Gen. Taylor had repeated warnings of an impending attack; yet he pertinaciously adhered to his preconceived opinions, and until the 20th of February gave no heed to the information, and then his intelligence was so positive that he could no longer neglect it. After reconnoitering his position, finding it could be turned on the right as well as on the left, and being satisfied that Santa Anna was at the Encarnacion, thirty miles from his camp, he reluctantly determined to fall back.

General Taylor, in a letter addressed to General E. G. W. Butler, dated the 4th March 1847, says, "Not exactly liking my position, having ascertained that Santa Anna could gain my rear by two roads on my right and one on my left, and deeming it prudent not to divide my forces, and having apprehensions about my supplies, which were in Saltillo, I determined at once to fall back towards that place about 12 miles, and occupy a strong position between two spurs of a mountain with a narrow valley between them. Said position had been closely examined by the topographical engineers under the eye of General Wool, who deemed it admirably adapted to meet a large with a small force, as well as adapted to the description of force which composed our army. Gen. Taylor therefore fell back, and occupied it on the evening of the 21st. Colonel Yell, with his regiment, was left at Agua Nueva to look out for the enemy, with orders, should he arrive, after destroying such property as could be brought off, to fall back to Buena Vista. Colonel McKee, with his regiment and a section of Washington's battery, was halted at La Encantada to support Colonel Yell, should he be driven in and pursued by the enemy. Colonel Hardin, with the 1st Illinois regiment, encamped at the pass, called by Santa Anna Angostura.

On the arrival of the army at Buena Vista, the evening of the 21st, General Taylor proceeded to Saltillo, taking with him the batteries of Captain's Sherman and Bragg (eight pieces), Lieutenant Colonel May's squadron of dragoons, and the Mississippi regiment, comprising all the troops that had ever been in battle or under fire; leaving Brigadier General Wool in command of the residue of the troops, who promptly made arrangements to receive the enemy.

The hacienda or farm of Buena Vista has imparted its name to a renowned and bloody battle. It is situated in a narrow valley, between two ranges of mountains connected with the great chain of the Sierra Madre. A branch of the River Tigre, which unites with the gulf of Mexico near the mouth of the Rio Grande, flows through it. It is on the road leading from San Luis de Potosi to Saltillo, twenty-one miles north of Agua Nueva, and five and a half miles south of Saltillo. La Angostura is a mile and a half in advance of the hacienda, towards Agua Nueva, and on the same road. It is a narrow defile, of which the road occupies the greater part. On the left of the road, in front and rear of the pass, a succession of plateaux stretch back to the mountains, skirted

on either side by deep ravines which form tongues of land, or spurs, which extend from the mountain nearly to the road. The one most elevated and overlooking all other spurs, and which comes nearest to the road, and capable of a strong defence, forms with the River Tigre the pass called Angostura, or as Santa Anna called it in one of his dispatches, the Thermopylæ of Mexico. On the right of the pass the stream had formed a complicated net-work of channels, interspersed with deep gullies with perpendicular sides, rendering a near approach on that side impracticable for either artillery, cavalry, or even infantry. The front and rear of the position are bounded by two deep ravines, extending to the mountains, and very difficult to pass with artillery.

The whole of the American forces did not exceed 4600, of whom only 406 were regular soldiers, being cavalry and artillery; the remainder was composed of volunteers. A considerable part of this army had been formed of Wool's column, and had been trained under his discipline. Amongst these were Washington's battery (8 pieces), a squadron of dragoons under Captain Steen, two Illinois regiments commanded by Colonels Hardin and Bissel, a company from Texas under Captain Conner, and a regiment of mounted men under Colonel Yell from Arkansas. The residue of the force comprised the two artillery companies of Captains Sherman and Bragg, a squadron of regular cavalry under Lieut. Colonel May, the Mississippi regiment which General Taylor kept near his person, the 2d Kentucky under Colonel McKee, a brigade from Indiana under Brigadier General Lane, and a regiment of Kentucky mounted men under Colonel Humphrey Marshall. These regiments and corps, excepting four companies of the Illinois regiments under Major Warren, with captain Webster's artillery stationed at Saltillo for its defence, constituted the whole force engaged in the great Battle of Buena Vista.

General Wool, on the evening of the 21st, after General Taylor had gone to Saltillo, ordered Colonel Hardin to strengthen the position at the pass, by throwing up a parapet on the height on the left of the road, and by digging a small ditch and making a parapet extending from the road around the edge of the gully on the right of the road; a parapet was also thrown up across the road, for the protection of Washington's battery. In the course of the same evening, General Wool received orders from General Taylor, then at Saltillo, to reinforce Colonel Yell with Colonel Marshall's regiment of Kentucky cavalry, and the squadron of the 1st dragoons.

The enemy arrived at Agua Nueva during the night, and the American outposts fell back to Buena Vista. Santa Anna the next morning advanced, and took a position with his army in front of the pass of Angostura. General Wool notified General Taylor of his approach, and at the same time moved his troops forward to the pass, and occupied a line which, according to the report of General Taylor, was one "of remarkable strength." The troops were stationed as follows: At the pass and in the road was Washington's battery of eight pieces. Directly in rear of the battery, a hill, around which the road forked, was occupied by the 2d Kentucky regiment, commanded by Colonel McKee. On the left, and in immediate communication with the battery, Colonel Hardin, with six companies of the 1st Illinois, was posted on an eminence which

overlooked the country. Two companies of the same regiment, under Lieutenant Colonel Weatherford, were stationed on the right of the road. This was considered by General Wool the strongest point in the line of defence, and the key to the position, and therefore was strongly supported on the left and rear. As long as this position could be maintained, the enemy with his artillery could not advance beyond it without great difficulty and labor. The 2d Illinois, under Colonel Bissell, was stationed on the left of the 2d Kentucky; the Indiana brigade, under General Lane, on the ridge to the left, and a short distance to the rear of the 2d Illinois, with Steen's squadron of dragoons in rear. Colonels Marshal and Yell, with their regiments, were posted on the left towards the mountains. The rifle companies of these regiments were dismounted, and, with the rifle battalion under Major Gorman, stationed at the foot of the mountain, under Colonel Marshall. Such was the order of battle on the morning of the 22d February, 1847, in which the little American army was waiting to receive the attack of the whole military force of the Mexican Republic. The positions were judiciously selected, and all that military skill could effect was done; but the fate of the battle did not alone depend on the skill or courage of the commanders. It was a crisis which demanded the physical powers and mental resources of every individual in the army, who, like the Spartans of old, were defending another Thermopylæ.

About 10 o'clock on the morning of the 22d, General Taylor returned from Saltillo, bringing with him Sherman's and Bragg's batteries, Lieutenant Colonel May's squadron of dragoons and the Mississippi regiment; leaving behind one piece of Bragg's battery under Lieutenant Shover, and two companies of the Mississippi regiment under Captain Rodgers, to guard his camp near Saltillo. On his arrival he was received by the troops with enthusiastic cheers, which were also extended to General Wool, who took occasion to pass along the front of all the regiments and corps, and to remind them that the day "was the birth-day of Washington, the father of our country," and to say that "he trusted no American soldier would disgrace it." The soldiers felt the force of the appeal, and responded to it with three enthusiastic cheers. The associations of memory, like the electric fire in the wires of the telegraph, ran in an instant from the wild defile in the Mexican mountains to the quiet and beautiful lawns of Mount Vernon. The name of Washington, which cheers in every country the heart of Americans, ran along the lines. The influence of heroic names is always felt. With Americans the name of Washington is a spell which opens the way to victory and glory; and that name nerved the hearts of our soldiers, shut up as they were among the mountains in the enemy's country, and encompassed by the direst perils of war. The name of Washington, in thundering tones, rang through the valley, and was echoed from the mountains.

The accounts of the number of the Mexican army are not very discordant, varying from 20,000 to 25,000. Santa Anna placed it at 20,000 in his communication to General Taylor, demanding a surrender. In an official communication to his government, he stated that he had only about 14,500 in the action at Angostura. In this number he did not include General Miñon's force at Saltillo. His cavalry, lancers, engineers and artillery were in large proportions when compared with the infantry

Twenty pieces of artillery, 8, 16 and 24 pounders, were mounted, besides a number of pieces in wagons. The men were all well clad, and, according to the account of General Miñon, were supplied with provisions. His army was the elite of the soldiery of Mexico, and many were veterans who had been engaged in the contest for independence against the Spanish armies, and all the civil wars which followed on the termination of the Spanish rule.

General Taylor on his arrival found the troops, as he says in his report, "in position, occupying a line of remarkable strength." At 11 o'clock A. M., he received from Santa Anna a summons to surrender. He was allowed one hour's time to deliberate, to commence at the moment the flag of truce arrived at his camp. General Taylor was informed at the same time that he was surrounded by 20,000 men. The demand was instantly declined.

Shortly after the return of Santa Anna's flag, it was discovered that four battalions of his light troops, under General Ampudia, were ascending the mountains, evidently with an intention to turn the American left. To meet and check this movement, General Wool ordered Colonel Marshall, with the Kentucky and Arkansas mounted regiment, and the riflemen of the Indiana battalion under Major Gorman, on the mountain side, which movement commenced about 3 o'clock P. M. At the same time the enemy opened upon them, from the road, a howitzer battery, and threw a few shells, but without effect. Under a supposed indication of a demonstration of the enemy on the American right, Gen. Taylor was induced to order the 2d Kentucky regiment, Bragg with two pieces of artillery, and Pike's squadron of Arkansas cavalry, to the right, across the gullies. To arrive at their position, where they bivouacked for the night, they were compelled to march by a circuitous route, some two miles or more. This movement Santa Anna considered a ruse, and paid no attention to it. Three pieces of Washington's battery, under Lieut. O'Brien and Lieut. Bryan of the topographical engineers, had been detached to the left on the plateau, supported by the 2nd Indiana regiment under Colonel Bowles. The skirmishing of the light troops on the mountains was kept up, with trifling loss on the part of the Americans, until dark. At the close of the day, General Taylor having, as he says in his report, "become convinced that no serious attack would be made before the next morning," returned with the Mississippi regiment and the 2nd dragoons to Saltillo, leaving the battle ground in charge of General Wool. The troops bivouacked on the field, and slept on their arms.

Santa Anna, not satisfied with the glory won by his arms, resolved to show his prowess in another field, and try by the force of eloquence to convince his soldiers, that, like Julius Cæsar, he was not only a general, but an orator. He addressed his soldiers, and enlarged on the atrocities of the barbarians of the North, who had left the Mexicans no resource but the sword. He said their brethren had fallen in resisting the unholy and cowardly invasion of their country. Their deaths should be avenged. It was true they had already endured much, but they would soon be rewarded for all their toil and hardships, from the riches and abundant stores of the enemy, who had dared to pollute their soil. He had magnanimously offered the enemy their lives, but his clemency had been rejected, and no

alternative was left but their extermination, and consequently no quarter was to be given.

The empty boastings in this atrocious address inflated the Mexican soldiers with an idea that they were invincible, and that they could conquer this "handful" of Americans, as Santa Anna had denominated them, with as much ease as they had captured the party of Majors Gaines and Borland at Encarnacion. The promise of plunder awakened their cupidity, and the license to murder, sanctioned by the President of the Republic, and their own and immediate commander, stimulated their ferocious passions into frensy. They thought not of the usages of war among civilized nations, and the terrible retribution to which they would expose themselves. In their rage, so loud were their shoutings, that they were distinctly heard within the American lines. "Viva Santa Anna!" "Viva la Republica!" "Libertad y Muerte!" came thundering down the winds. As soon as the shouting had ceased, Santa Anna's band was heard "discoursing most sweet music;" so sweet, that even the stern barbarians of the North, oblivious of all their perils and anxieties, stood leaning on their arms, and listened with rapture to its exquisite harmony: its soft and gentle tones soothed their feelings; and amidst the deep solitudes of the wild mountains, they realized that common sympathy asserted in the holy writings, "that of one blood all the nations were made." The music ceased, and all was still. The dark shade of the mountains enveloped the valley in triple gloom. Darkness, like a funeral pall, enshrouded mountain and valley; black and storm-bearing clouds were drifting across the sky, a cold rain was falling, and not a ray of light enlivened the universal gloom. On the border of the northern tropic the soldiers were shivering with cold; for the elevation of the land, rather than the degree of latitude, determines the climate. The Mexicans suffered as much, if not more, than the Americans, although they were much better clad. "The night," says the Mexican engineer in his report, "was absolutely infernal, owing to the cold rain and wind, which last almost amounted to a hurricane." On the mountain side the cold was so intense that the American soldiers kindled fires; and as they were successively lighted up at the different posts, they seemed, says one of the officers, to present a display like the exhibition of fireworks on festive occasions. In the valley all was darkness, silence and gloom. It was a night of suffering, painful anxiety, and unremitting watchfulness on the part of General Wool; for, as General Taylor was at Saltillo, the whole responsibility rested on him. He made few changes in his order of battle. He gave the left, under the mountains, in charge of Brig. General Lane, with orders to maintain his position to the last extremity.

In the course of the night of the 22d the enemy reinforced their light troops under Ampudia in the mountains, with 1500 or 2000 infantry. At 2 o'clock A. M. on the 23rd, the American advanced pickets were driven in. At dawn of day, Ampudia renewed the attack on the extreme left, and was successfully met by Colonel Marshall, with his riflemen, including Major Gorman's. To these General Wool added Major Trail's battalion of Illinois riflemen. Whilst this effort was making in the mountains to turn the American left, Santa Anna organized three columns, one under General Mora y Villamil, and two under Ge-

nerals Pacheco and Lombardini, the first to attack and carry Washington's battery, and the two latter to attack and carry the left of the centre under the mountains, and force an entrance to the plateau; and from thence, if it had not already been done by Villamil, to carry the key of the position, the height on the left of Washington's battery, and thus open a free passage to Saltillo. At the same time he established a battery of three pieces under the mountain, and about 800 yards distant from the left of the American centre. To meet this disposition of the enemy, General Wool had not, at the commencement of the action, more than 3300 men. The Mississippi regiment, one piece of Bragg's battery, and May's squadron of dragoons, were with General Taylor at Saltillo; and McKee's regiment, Captain Bragg with two pieces of artillery, and Pike's squadron of Arkansas cavalry, were to the right, two miles out of position.

Between 7 and 8 o'clock A. M., the column under Villamil, composed of infantry, lancers, and three pieces of artillery, moved on the road to attack Washington's battery. As soon as it came within range, the destructive power of the American artillery was developed, and the ground shook beneath the feet of the combatants. The war came back in thundering echoes from the mountains, and wild and exulting shouts broke forth from the Americans as they witnessed the accuracy and precision of the firing. Calm and collected amidst the din, Washington continued to hurl his ponderous missiles into the close ranks of the enemy, who began to falter, discovered signs of wavering, then halted, and finally flying into the hollows and gorges of the mountains, shielded themselves from the fire, and never renewed the attack on the pass.

The columns of Pacheco and Lombardini were about the same time put in motion with Villamil, and directed against the left of the centre. These were met by the gallant Brigadier General Lane, with the 2nd Indiana regiment under Colonel Bowles, Lieut. O'Brien's artillery (three pieces), and by the 2nd Illinois under the gallant Colonel Bissell, and part of Captain Sherman's battery, and repulsed with great loss, and the Guanaguato corps was entirely dispersed. An engineer in the staff of Santa Anna says, in a report of the battle, "that a column of 3000 infantry and four pieces of artillery, commanded by General Pacheco, moved to the right to take the height in front of the enemy's centre, and at 9 o'clock a heavy fire was opened: much havoc was made among the enemy, and the height was carried by force of arms. We lost a large number of men, and the new corps of Guanaguato dispersed. If at that juncture we had been attacked with vigor, we would probably have been beaten."

It was at this juncture, when the Guanaguato corps was driven back and dispersed, that General Lane ordered his left to advance; when, whilst the gallant O'Brien was taking his position, Colonel Bowles ordered the 2d Indiana regiment to retreat, which soon became a flight. In vain did General Lane and his staff attempt to rally them. It was in this attack, that Captain Lincoln, one of the bravest among the brave, of General Wool's staff, was killed. He was shot through the head, and fell dead upon the neck of his horse.

The flight of Bowles' regiment opened a passage to the plateau, which Santa Anna was not slow to discover; and "new columns," says the

Mexican engineer, " were organized, and successively charged with extraordinary firmness; and though the enemy defended himself with extraordinary valor, he was driven back from the advanced position of his centre, and we remained in possession of the field on the left of his centre."

The regiment under Colonel Bowles having fled, left only O'Brien's battery (three pieces), six companies of the 2d Illinois regiment, and Sherman's battery, to resist the advance and charges of the Mexican columns, and consequently they were compelled to change position. In doing so, the gallant O'Brien lost one piece, a four-pounder. The Mexicans now appeared in great force on the plateau, descending toward the height on the left of Washington's battery. They were gallantly met by the 2nd Illinois under Colonel Bissell, part of the 1st Illinois under Colonel Hardin, Sherman's battery, the 2d Kentucky under Colonel McKee, who had just arrived with Bragg's two pieces, by order of General Wool, from the extreme right, where they had been ordered the night before by General Taylor; and forced back with great loss to the base of the mountains, several thousand passing to the left and rear. Santa Anna, however, maintained his position under the mountains, and established there a battery of three pieces, with which he much annoyed the Americans during the day. As the Mexican columns were passing to the left and rear, General Taylor arrived from Saltillo, bringing with him Lieutenant Colonel May's squadron of the 2d dragoons, having left the Mississippi regiment to follow. He says in his report of the battle, that " the enemy was now pouring masses of infantry and cavalry along the base of the mountain on our left, and was gaining our rear in great force. At this moment I arrived upon the field. The enemy having gained the plateau, between the key to the American positions and the mountains, Colonel Marshall, who was engaged with the Mexican light troops, was compelled to retire; and with his regiment the Arkansas, Major Gorman's and Trail's riflemen, after gallantly checking, several times, the advance of the enemy marching along the base of the mountains, concentrated at the hacienda of Buena Vista."

On the arrival of General Taylor upon the plateau, General Wool hastened in pursuit of the flying Indianians, in order to rally them, and with those who had retired from the mountains, to arrest the march of the enemy to the rear. He overtook Brig. General Lane, wounded in the arm, Colonel Bowles and Major Gorman, in and near the deep and broad ravine that bounded the rear of the American position. Major Gorman appeared in great pain, from an injury received by the fall of his horse. After a few moments conversation with them, and giving such orders as the occasion required, General Wool continued the pursuit in the direction of the hacienda of Buena Vista. About half way between that place and the pass of Angostura, he met the Mississippi regiment, under Colonel Jefferson Davis, coming from Saltillo, having left the road and taken a diagonal direction towards the plateau. Like General Wool, he was exerting himself to induce the fugitives to return to the field of battle. The Colonel says, in his report, that he " appealed to them to return with us and renew the fight, pointing to our regiment as a mass of men behind which they might securely form. With a few ho-

noble exceptions, his appeal was unheeded." The Colonel further says, that "General Wool was upon the ground, making great efforts to rally the men who had given way. I approached him and asked, if he would send another regiment to sustain me in an attack upon the enemy before us. He was alone, and after promising the support, went in person to send it." The Colonel now moved gallantly against the enemy, and checked his advance and compelled him to fall back. Not receiving the support promised by General Wool, as soon as he expected, "he ordered his regiment to retire" some distance to his rear. Whilst the Mississippi regiment had been thus engaged with the advance of the enemy on the left, a large body of lancers under General Torrejon had proceeded further along the base of the mountains until it came opposite the hacienda of Buena Vista, then turned suddenly to its left and marched upon it, and, as Colonel Marshall says, "in most gallant style and beautiful order." These were gallantly met by the Kentucky and Arkansas cavalry under Marshall and Yell, and the riflemen of Majors Trail and Gorman, and repulsed with considerable loss. Part were driven over the mountains on the right, hastened by the arrival of a section of artillery under Lieutenant Reynolds, who threw a few shells among them as they passed the mountain. Lieutenant Colonel May arrived with Reynolds, but not in time to assist in repelling this attack. The greater part of the lancers, however, succeeded in rejoining the columns under the mountains, in front of the Mississippi regiment. In this affair at the hacienda, the gallant Colonel Yell, and Captain Porter of the Arkansas regiment, and Adjutant Vaughn of the Kentucky regiment, were killed. Major Monroe, of the artillery, was reported to have greatly assisted in rallying the infantry, and judiciously posting them to meet and resist the attack of the lancers. Lieutenant Colonel Morrison of the 1st Illinois, and Lieutenant Colonel Roane of the Arkansas regiment, were reported as having conducted themselves with great gallantry on this occasion; also Major Dix, paymaster, in rallying a part of the Indiana regiment, and conducting them back to the field of battle.

By the time the repulsed lancers from the hacienda had joined the column under the mountains, General Wool brought up the 3d Indiana regiment under Colonel Lane, who was joined by Brig. General Lane and a detachment of the 2d Indianians, and forming a junction with the Mississippi regiment and a small detachment of the 2d Indianians under Colonel Bowles, and a piece of artillery under Lieutenant Kilburn, moved against the advancing Mexicans, and compelled them to retire towards the mountains. Not long after, they were joined by Captains Sherman and Bragg, with their remaining pieces, in all six, including the pieces of Reynolds and Kilburn. The former, Sherman, was posted on the right, and the latter, Bragg, on the left.

Santa Anna, no doubt from apprehensions that he would lose his column, sent a flag to General Taylor, "to know what he wanted." General Taylor sent for General Wool, and requesting him to deliver his answer to the Mexican general-in-chief, at the same time sent orders to the troops "to cease firing." Upon reaching the lines, General Wool *could not cause the enemy to cease their fire upon the Americans, and having no time to spare, declared the parley at an end;* "*and accordingly returned*

without having an interview with the Mexican chief." After reporting to General Taylor the result of his mission, General Wool returned to the left and renewed the action. The Mississippi, 2d Indiana, and Sherman's and Bragg's batteries, now moved with great vigor against the Mexicans and closely pursued them, whilst great havoc was being made in their ranks. A staff officer who was present and acted a gallant part, gives the following graphic description of what took place on the left. He says, " perceiving that some movements of importance were about taking place on our left, I repaired to a point in rear of the Mississippi and Indiana regiments. General Wool galloped to the eminence on which I had paused to witness this intensely exciting struggle before me. The general, perceiving at the instant a decided wavering in the enemy's ranks, and, apparently anxious to throw him into irretrievable confusion, shouted to the engaged troops to charge, repeating the order several times; at the same time turning to me, said, ' Captain, ride quickly, and order them to charge.' If I remember rightly, I think at this moment Mr. Addicks came up, whom General Wool sent with orders to Colonel May, to hasten up with his dragoons. I rode to the regiments, and delivered the order of ' Charge ' to one of the colonels. The men showed themselves much discouraged, and gave little heed to what was said: many had already fallen, and many were still dragging themselves away, or being carried off by their companies. I rode the length of the infantry line, repeating to company officers, and even to soldiers, that General Wool had ordered a charge; in hopes that excited by the repulse which they had so nobly given to the enemy, they would decide the day by a vigorous charge. I again joined General Wool, and found him with Bragg's battery. At this moment he sent a second officer to Lieut. Colonel May, to hasten up his command. In the mean time the Mexicans had reformed their cavalry, and seemed to threaten Bragg's battery, and he was permitted ' to limber his pieces, and retire a short distance' to the rear." Soon after, the troops advanced, and " being but a short distance from the line," he says, " I had an opportunity of viewing what I considered to be the finest display that was seen on the field that day. Sherman's battery still kept up the fire on the right, and the dismayed Mexicans retired from us in disorder, until probably some two thousand of them became huddled together in the recesses and ravines of the mountain, from which there was no escape, unless under a direct and deadly fire from the infantry and Sherman's and Bragg's batteries. At this moment, a flag " (from General Taylor), " arrested our progress, and saved that devoted wing of the Mexican army." General Taylor, under the impression that the Mexicans would surrender, " and to save human life," sent Mr. Crittenden, a volunteer aid, to demand a surrender of the Mexicans thus huddled together in great confusion, and which Captain Bragg refers to in his report of the part he acted. The troops were ordered to cease firing, and the Mexicans with the flag made their escape," and regained the plateau. The staff officer proceeds to say, " Bragg's battery being no longer needed, General Wool ordered it to the point now threatened, and I followed it." The Mexicans on the left, having made good their retreat with Mr. Crittenden and his flag, General Wool ordered the remainder of ths troops to the plateau, to which he repaired.

As the retreating column came on the plateau, it was met by the troops under the gallant Colonels Hardin, Bissell, and McKie, and driven before them towards the Mexican lines with great precipitation and havoc. But the crafty Santa Anna, anxiously looking for the return of his almost lost column, having prepared himself, unobserved by General Taylor, came suddenly and unexpectedly to the rescue of his column with all his reserves, whilst General Taylor was absent from his position, as he says, "for a moment," and overwhelmed the American infantry of the centre, notwithstanding their extraordinary gallantry, and drove them from the plateau, and captured the two remaing pieces of artillery under Lieut. O'Brien. The infantry were pursued by the Mexican lancers down the ravines in front of the pass. Here they were received and repelled by the well directed fire from Washington's battery, and the infantry saved. It was in this contest that Colonel Hardin, Colonel McKie, Lieut. Colonel Henry Clay Jr. (a son of the great statesman Henry Clay), Captain Zabriskie, and many others fell, gallantly sustaining the honor and glory of their country.

It was at the moment the infantry of the centre gave way before the reserves of Santa Anna, that Captains Sherman and Bragg's batteries, the latter leading, arrived on the plateau, followed by the Mississippi and 3d Indiana regiments, hurried from the left, where they had been engaged under General Wool with the Mexicans, who had gained our left and rear, but now, having regained the plateau in consequence of the flag sent by General Taylor, united with Santa Anna's reserves. In reference to these movements, General Taylor, in his report, says "that the extreme right of the enemy continued to retreat along the base of the mountain, and finally, in spite of all our efforts, effected a junction with the remainder of the army. In the meantime, the firing had partially ceased upon the principal field. The enemy seemed to confine his efforts to the protection of his artillery, and I had left the plateau for a moment, when I was called hither by a very heavy musketry fire; on regaining that position, I discovered that our infantry (Illinois and Kentucky) had engaged a greatly superior force of the enemy, evidently his reserves, and that they had been overwhelmed by numbers. The moment was most critical. Captain O'Brien, with two pieces, had sustained this heavy charge to the very last, and was finally obliged to leave his guns on the field, his infantry support being entirely routed. Captain Bragg, who had just arrived from the left, was ordered at once into battery, without any infantry to support him; and, at the imminent risk of losing his guns, this officer came immediately into action, the Mexican line being but a few yards from the muzzle of his pieces. The first discharge of cannister caused the enemy to hesitate, the second and third drove them back in disorder, and saved the day." General Taylor ought to have embraced in his eulogy, Lieutenant Thomas, whom it appears he overlooked, and captain Sherman. The first had been in action the whole day on the plateau, and was in battery, and actually engaged with the enemy, and doing great execution, at the time of Bragg's arrival. Captain Sherman closely followed the latter, and came into action with his pieces a few moments after Bragg, and performed equal service with any other battery on the plateau. Major Sherman says: "Captain

Bragg and myself started from the foot of the mountain together, by order of General Wool, each with three guns. Captain Bragg received the order first, and therefore led; my carriages followed in immediate succession." General Taylor in his report, proceeds to say, that after the arrival of Bragg's battery, " the rest of our artillery had taken position on the plateau, covered by the Mississippi and 3d Indiana regiments; the former of which had reached the ground in time to pour a fire into the right flank of the enemy, thus to contribute to his repulse." General Lane, as well as Colonel Lane, complained of injustice by General Taylor to the 3d Indiana regiment, by omitting to mention its arrival on the plateau, with or before the Mississippi regiment. The colonel says he was up in time to drive back to the mountains a large body of lancers, who were pursuing a party of infantry descending the ravines towards the roads.

The enemy, although repulsed, made a show of returning. To meet his expected return, General Wool collected all the American troops that could be rallied, and concentrated them on the plateau, whilst Lieutenant Colonel May was ordered by General Taylor, with the 1st and 2d dragoons, up the deep ravine bounding the American rear, to menace the Mexican battery under the mountain, on the left of the plateau. The Mexicans, however, did not return, and at dusk retired to their camp. The Americans bivouacked on the field, and during the night rested on their arms.

Whilst the great contest of the 23d was carried on at Buena Vista and the pass, General Miñon, with 1200 lancers, who had been traversing the country from Palomas to Salado the month previous, made his appearance the 22d on the plains of Saltillo. He remained a few hours without a gun being fired, and retired for the night in the direction of Palomas pass. On his appearance, the governor and commandant of the city, Major Warren, a gallant and highly meritorious officer, agreeably to orders previously received from General Wool, ordered Captains Morgan, Prentiss and Hacker with their companies into the cathedral, and Captain Wheeler to support Captain Webster in charge of the field work on the height overlooking the town. The streets of the city were barricaded.

On the morning of the 23d, General Miñon again appeared, and moved along the base of the mountain in the direction of Buena Vista. A few shells were thrown from Webster's battery towards the lancers, but without effect. Lieutenant Shover says in his report, that about this time, " a great dust was seen in the direction of Buena Vista, and soon after a considerable number of mounted volunteers came running along the road." When they came into General Taylor's camp at Arispa's mills, " they reported themselves as belonging to the Arkansas cavalry. They were soon followed by some runaway volunteer infantry." Every effort was made to induce them to halt, " but with little effect." As they reported the army routed at Buena Vista, Lieutenant Shover was induced to believe, that he would be under the necessity of making a desperate stand to defend the camp; and, therefore, did not attack Miñon, now in the open plain. Soon after, Miñon took a position intercepting all communication between Saltillo and Buena Vista. Between two

and three o'clock, Captain Webster ordered Lieutenant Donaldson, with a 24-pounder howitzer, supported by Captain Wheeler's company, and Lieutenant Shover with a six-pounder, to attack the lancers, which was done; and the Mexicans were driven with great precipitation and considerable loss from the plain. They did not return, but disappeared through the mountain passes.

In the course of the night of the 23d, the wounded at Buena Vista were removed to Saltillo; and every preparation was made to meet the enemy should he return, and no one doubted that he would the next morning, and renew the action.

Every position of the Americans had been regained, and both armies held the ground which they occupied at the commencement of the battle in the morning. The Mexicans could boast of no trophies, but O'Brien's guns. A cannonade was kept up from the batteries, and some dropping shots of mtsketry were occasionally heard. The sun went down, and the stillness of the grave-yard pervaded the battle field. A night of intense cold set in: no cheers, or music, or shouts of exultation enlivened the Mexican camp. The Americans remained in their positions, exhausted with fatigue, and shivering with cold; for they had been forbidden to light fires; but they were supplied at their posts with meat, bread and water, and their horses with forage. "It was a gloomy and horrible night." No sounds were heard, excepting the flapping of the wings of the ferocious and disgusting vultures, which inhabited the mountain tops of this wild region, as they flitted through the darkness across the valley; and the distant howls of the wolves, eager to rush from their dens. Vulture and wolf had scented the blood, and were ravenous for the feast!

A numerous line of sentinels were posted in front of the American army, and a piquet of 25 dragoons, commanded by Lieutenants Carleton and Givens, in the ravine in the rear of the plateau. Two companies commanded by Captains Pike and Preston, formed a corps of observation on the right of Washington's battery. The wounded were transported in wagons to Saltillo, where the cathedral had been converted into a hospital. All who could be spared from the garrison at Saltillo, which had suffered no loss, and undergone but little fatigue, came down to the pass by order of General Taylor, under the command of Major Warren, perfectly fresh, and eager for battle. They were assigned to position by General Wool, on the plateau. Brigadier General Thomas F. Marshall, of Kentucky, who had occupied the pass of Rincorado, by exertions almost incredible, and encumbered with artillery, made a forced night march of thirty-five miles. On the morning of the 24th of February, the Americans could have renewed the battle, with a force equal to that of the preceding day, notwithstanding the loss of 750 in killed and wounded; but the timidity of the Mexicans saved them from another bloody struggle.

General Taylor and General Wool occupied the same tent during the night. The latter, from constant interruption for orders and supplies, was unable to sleep. At the dawn of day he mounted his horse, and accompanied by his aid, Lieutenant McDowell, to reconnoiter the positions of the enemy, when he discovered that they had retreated. He re-

turned and announced it to the troops. "Then it was," says Carleton, "that a sound went along our lines, ever to be remembered. It was but a single cry at first; then a murmur, which rose and swelled upon the ear like the voice of the tempest; then a prolonged and thrilling shout, Victory! victory! victory! The enemy has fled! the field is ours!" Then followed the wild hurrah of the whole American army. Shouts and triumphant gratulations followed! Tears started from the eyes of men, and moistened their rough faces, yet black with the smoke of the fight, who had, on the preceding day, gazed without emotion on rivers of blood.

The general then communicated the news to General Taylor, and they embraced in the presence of many officers. General Wool congratulated General Taylor upon his great victory, who returned the compliment, by bestowing upon Wool the highest praise for his conduct throughout the contest.

Thus terminated, not a battle, but a succession of battles, several of which were terrible and bloody; commencing on the afternoon of the 22d, and ending at dark on the evening of the 23d of February, 1847.

Information was received from one of the scouts that Santa Anna had fallen back to Agua Nueva. The reason alleged for taking this disgraceful step was the necessity of obtaining refreshment for the soldiers; but General Miñon denies that any such necessity existed. He says that Santa Anna had force sufficient to destroy the American army, and that he positively knew that he had ample supplies of provisions and forage. "His retirement," says Miñon, "was unjustifiable, and much more so from the manner in which he undertook it: in the midst of the darkness of the night; abandoning, without necessity, hundreds of the unhappy wounded; and in appearance much more like that of a fugitive, desirous of concealing from the enemy his defeat, that he might not finish his destruction, than that of a general who desired to take a breathing time, but who could have obliged any that attempted to impede him to give way."

On the morning of the 24th of February, Generals Taylor and Wool, with their respective staffs and a small escort, advanced along the road leading to Agua Nueva as far as Encantada. A spectacle transcendant in horror met their eyes. Many Americans lay dead on the ground, apparently murdered while helpless from wounds: these were all stripped naked, and mutilated. The corpses of the Mexicans had suffered no indignities, but lay unmutilated where they fell. "The plateau," says Carleton, "was covered with the dead, and the gorges and ravines in front were filled with them. The ground, furrowed by cannon shot and torn by bursting shells, was literally reeking with blood. Men and horses, parts of equipments, shattered musquets, drums, trumpets, lances, swords, caps, in fine all the paraphernalia of armies were scattered, crimson with gore, in every direction." Two or three Mexican surgeons had been left with the wounded. As the Americans passed along, their cries for water were agonizing. The Americans dismounted and refreshed them with water and food; and General Taylor, commiserating their condition, sent them ample supplies of provisions, and ordered that such

of the wounded as could be removed, should be conveyed to the hospital at Saltillo.

Major Bliss, the assistant adjutant general of the American commander, was sent by him from Encantada with a flag to Agua Nueva, to negotiate an exchange of prisoners. Only seven Americans had been taken in the battle; but the general was anxious to recover those previously taken at Encamadion, amongst whom were Majors Gaines and Borland and Captain Cassius M. Clay. Major Bliss was instructed to request Santa Anna to send for the wounded Mexicans, then prisoners in the hands of the Americans; and he was also instructed to assure him that the American government were anxious for peace. Major Bliss found Santa Anna surrounded by his generals; and having communicated the purpose of his mission, received the following reply from the vainglorious coxcomb, who, as president and commander-in-chief of the Republic of Mexico, held its destinies in his hands: "Say to General Taylor," said he, "that we sustain the most sacred of causes, the defence of our territory and the preservation of our nationality and rights; that we are not the aggressors, and that our government never offended that of the United States. We can say nothing of peace while the Americans are on this side of the *Rio Grande del Norte*, occupying any part of the Mexican territory, or blockade our ports. We are resolved to perish or vindicate our rights. Fortune may not always favor the enemy: his experience on the 22d and 23d should convince him that his luck may change. The Americans wage against us a war of vandalism, whose excesses outrage those sentiments of humanity which one civilized nation ought to evince towards another." Santa Anna delivered himself of much florid eloquence in declaiming against the cruelty of the Americans for desolating some of the *haciendas* near Agua Nueva, and reducing many women and children to a state of widowhood and orphanage. His wounded he confided to General Taylor, "under the protection of the laws of nations," and the prisoners he was willing to exchange. He insisted that his retreat to Agua Nueva was only for convenience, and that he had won a splendid victory at Buena Vista! making good an ironical saying applied to his Spanish ancestors after a disgraceful defeat which they claimed as a victory, "*The valiant and victorious Spaniards ran away!*"

During the 24th of February, the Americans were employed in burying the dead. The wounded Mexicans were cared for. Of the wounded Americans on the field, but few escaped the knives of Santa Anna's butchers, who were far more expert in the shambles than in the battle-field. The surgeons obtained much credit. Alike brave and humane, they were found on the field, and even during the hottest of the fire, at the side of the wounded: their work completed, they flew to the ranks and did duty as soldiers, until again called off to administer aid to the wounded. Heroes in the fight, philanthropists in the hospitals, they shrunk from neither duty; and of the 294 Mexican prisoners, 149 were in the hospital under their care.

The works at Angustora were strengthened, and the engineers were employed in making good the defences.

On the 26th, Santa Anna, in great haste, broke up his camp at Agua

Nueva, of which the Americans on the next day took possession. The Mexican dead were unburied, and the deserted buildings were filled with their wounded. The Mexican army was in a state of anarchy and disorganization. As early as the evening of the 23d, 3000 had deserted; and large masses, designing to escape from the camp, followed the deserters. Had the Americans been in a condition to undertake a vigorous pursuit, the whole Mexican army would have been utterly dispersed; but General Taylor, with his horses and men, alike worn down with fatigue and nearly exhausted, deemed it unadvisable to pursue, even a flying enemy, across a desert destitute of water.

The loss of the Americans was 746, of whom 267 were killed, and 456 wounded and 23 missing; most of the last were probably killed. Of the few U. S. troops on the ground, Captain George Lincoln, of General Wool's staff, was the only officer killed. Captain Steen of the dragoons, Lieutenants O'Brien and French of the artillery, and Lieutenant Bryan of the topographical engineers, were wounded.

Of the volunteers, consisting of seven regiments, Brigadier General Law of Indiana was wounded. Colonels Hardin of Illinois, McKee of Kentucky, and Yell of Arkansas were killed, and Colonel Jefferson Davis of Mississippi wounded. Lieutenant Colonel Clay of Kentucky, Captains Zabreskie and Woodward of Illinois; Captains Kruder, Walker and Taggart of Indiana; Captain Willis of Kentucky, Captain Porter of Arkansas, Lieutenants Moore and McNulty of Mississippi; Fletcher, Ferguson, Robbins, Kelly, Steele, Batteson, Atherton, Price, Stoughton of Illinois; Parr of Indiana, Campbell and Leonard of Texas, and Adjutant Vaughan of Kentucky, were killed. Major Gorman of Indiana, Captains Sharp of Mississippi, Coffey and Baker of Illinois; Sanderson, Osborne, Shep and Conorer of Indiana; Shawkan of Kentucky, and Conner of the Texas Company; Lieuts. Stockharr, Corwine, Posey of Mississippi; Evans, McConnell, Pickett, Engleman. West of Illinois; Caver, Pennington, Lewis, Moore, Davis, Eperson of Indiana; Barber, Napier, Withers, Brown and Merryfield of Kentucky, were wounded.

Of those who fell on the bloody field of Buena Vista, the fate of none perhaps was more deeply regretted than that of the young and accomplished Lincoln, a son of a distinguished governor of Massachusetts, and on General Wool's staff as assistant adjutant general. General Taylor reports that he was a "young officer of high bearing and approved gallantry." General Wool says, "he was as brave, gallant and accomplished an officer as I ever knew. He fell in the execution of my orders, and in the attempt to rally our men."

"No loss," says General Taylor, "falls more heavily upon the army in the field, than that of Colonels Hardin and McKee, and Lieutenant Colonel Clay. Possessing in a remarkable degree the confidence of their commands, and the last two having enjoyed the advantage of a military education, I had looked to them particularly for support in case we met the enemy; and I need not say that their zeal in engaging the enemy, the cool and steadfast courage with which they maintained their positions during the day, fully realised my hopes, and caused me to feel yet more sensibly their untimely loss." General Wool says in his report: "Among the dead, some of the most gallant of our officers fell while leading their men

to the charge, and some who are well known to the country for distinguished services on other fields, among whom were Colonel A. Yell of Arkansas, Colonel William McKee, Lieutenant Colonel Clay of Kentucky, and Colonel Hardin of Illinois.

Yell was a representative in Congress from Arkansas: Hardin had held the same station; and Clay was a young lawyer of great promise.

Of the survivors of the battle, great credit was given to the officers of the artillery, both by General Taylor and General Wool.

General Taylor says in his official report, "The services of the light artillery, always conspicuous, were more than usually distinguished. Moving rapidly over the roughest ground, it was always in action at the right place and right time, and its well directed fire dealt destruction in the masses of the enemy. While I recommend to particular favor the gallant conduct and valuable services of Major Munroe, chief of artillery, and Captains Washington 4th artillery, and Sherman and Bragg 3d artillery, commanding batteries, I deem it no more than just to mention all the subaltern officers. They were nearly all detached at different times, and in every situation, exhibited conspicuous skill and gallantry;" and he particularly mentions Captains O'Brien and Shover, Lieutenants Brent, Whiting, Couch, Thomas, Reynolds, French and Donaldson, and Lieutenant Bryan of the topographical engineers. General Wool says: "I desire to express my high admiration, and to offer my warmest thanks to Captains Washington, Sherman and Bragg, and Lieutenants O'Brien and Thomas, and their batteries, to whose services at this point, and on every other part of the field, I think it justice to say, we are mainly indebted for the great victory so successfully achieved by our arms over the great force opposed to us, more than 20,000 men and seventeen pieces of artillery." General Wool also gave much credit to Major Munroe, Lieutenants Reynolds and Kilburn.

General Taylor spoke in handsome terms of the officers of his particular staff, Major Bliss, Captain Eaton, and Lieutenant Garnitt; also of Colonels Churchill and Belknap, the inspectors general. General Wool spoke in great praise of his own staff, Lieutenant McDowell, Captains Chapman, Howard, Davis, Sitgreaves, Assistant Surgeons Hitchcock and Provost, and several others. Colonel Churchill, he said, conducted himself with great coolness and judgment. His horse was several times wounded in the action. He gave him much credit for his exertions, from the opening of the campaign, in instructing and disciplining his column. General Wool also spoke in admiration of the conduct of Major Mansfield, of the corps of engineers; nor did he omit to do justice to the gallantry of his civil staff, viz. Thomas H. Addicks his interpreter, E. Marsh, H. R. Potts, Henry Harrison, C. I. Burgess, and J. E. Dusenbury, all government agents, who fearlessly carried his orders to every part of the field during the engagement of the 23d. General Taylor lavished his admiration on the Mississippi regiment and its commander.

Brigadier General Lane and Colonel Bissell were highly praised by both Generals Taylor and Wool, and many others: in fact, every officer, except some of the 2d Indiana regiment, did his duty; and the circumstances of the battle were such, that nearly the whole, subalterns as well as generals, became at times conspicuous.

In the first official despatch of General Taylor to the war office (February 24th, 1847), he names no one but General Wool, to whom he confesses his great obligations, and that he felt particularly indebted to him for his valuable services; and in the detailed report (March 6th), he repeats his acknowledgment of his obligations to him. "The high state of discipline and instruction of several of the volunteer regiments," he continued, "was attained under his command; and to his vigilance and arduous services before the action, and his gallantry and activity on the field, a large share of our success may justly be attributed." He concluded, by recommending him to the favorable notice of the government.

The fiery and enthusiastic temperament of Wool would have impelled him to desperate feats in arms, had not his true military genius, and his rapid and sagacious perception of circumstances, even in the very crisis of a battle, restrained him from rashness. He could draw with precision the difficult line between possibilities and impossibilities.

"Untaught to yield,
He blushed for nothing but an ill-fought field."

But in calculating the elements of a victory, many things must come into the computation, besides the personal prowess of the commanders.

In the first place, it is nearly certain that after the great drafts made by General Scott, including nearly all the soldiers of the regular army serving under General Taylor, that the latter must have retreated, as Scott advised, or fought a battle almost with the certainty of defeat, had it not been for the aid of General Wool's column, which formed a large part of his fighting force, and which, during the long march amongst the wild mountains and valleys of Mexico, had been trained and instructed under the eye of the commander in a manner which induced General Taylor to place his own command (except the small garrison at Monterey) under his instruction, and the work was commenced with great vigor at the camp at Agua Nueva. The severe discipline of General Wool occasioned much murmuring and complaint, but the soldiers were finally convinced that it saved them in the perilous crisis which they were compelled to meet. General Lane in public, and at the head of his volunteer brigade, rendered to General Wool his thanks for that severe discipline which, he said, saved the army. Many of the volunters who had made the loudest complaints, expressed their regret personally to him, and offered to follow wherever he would lead them.

In the second place, the sound judgment which Wool displayed in selecting the battle ground, and particularly in fortifying the pass of Angostura, another Thermopylæ, and in giving the command of the pass to Washington, in whose coolness and firmness he had entire confidence, contributed in no small degree to the success of the day.

On the 1st of March, Colonel Belknap, with a considerable force, proceeded to Encarnacion. White flags were displayed on all the buildings, but the guard fled on his approach: the Texans pursued and captured the whole. The hacienda presented a scene of horror and suffering, which words can scarcely describe. Three hundred Mexicans, amongst whom were five officers, were crowded together in a space so narrow, that it was with difficulty they could move; of these, 222 had been wounded, and had suffered much pain in dragging themselves with slow

and faltering steps to the hacienda; others were debilitated by fatigue, aggravated by hunger and thirst. Intermingled with the living, were the bodies of the dead, which they were too weak and helpless to remove. The wounds of some had inflamed, and they were screaming with agony. Others whose wounds had mortified, were sad and silent. A white-robed priest was quietly moving from one to the other, administering the last consolations of religion. Carleton, who was an eye witness, says: "The whole hacienda presented at one glance a picture of death, embracing all the degrees, from the strong man bearing up with fortitude against the sure and speedy fate which awaited him, down to the poor mortal struggling in the last throe of existence." These sufferings would seem to have reached the utmost limit of endurance, yet they were aggravated by their apprehensions. They had fallen into the hands of those who, their priests and President had taught them to believe, were utterly regardless of all divine and moral laws; a God-abandoned race, and reckless followers of the evil one, and remorseless and revengeful. Some even would have exaggerated them into cannibals, who drank human blood and fed on human flesh. From these ferocious Americans, denounced by Santa Anna as the Vandals of the North, they expected insults, and found sympathy: they expected most cruel insensibility to their sufferings, which even their own countrymen had taken no pains to alleviate; and found pity, and even tears: they expected death, and found mercy. The Americans, kneeling at the side of the sufferers, could only grasp their hands (for their language was not common), but they did it kindly: they gave them water, emptied their knapsacks, and, to feed their enemies, deprived themselves of food. Their kindness transcended even the requirements of the Scripture, and it was felt. There is a feeling of gratitude in hearts harder than rocks, and it discovered itself in the feeble acknowledgment which for the first time was whispered by the helpless Mexicans, in the words "*Buenos Americanos.*" Great as was the triumph of the Americans on the battle field, the moral triumph over obdurate, perverse and remorseless natures was greater, but it was temporary; the conquest of the human passions is beyond the power of man! Beyond Encarnacion for many miles, every hacienda and ranchero was filled with fugitives from Buena Vista. Their martial, and even their social spirit, entirely broken down, the soldiers continued to desert in masses; and even the President General himself deserted the remnant of his army, and repaired to the capital.

One ray of sunshine penetrated through the general darkness of the Mexican character. Lieutenant Sturgis, who had been captured while reconnoitering, was liberated by General Miñon, who presented him with a rich cloak and a horse.

The audacious Santa Anna cherished a hope that, by boasting, lying and bullying, he could induce the Mexican nation to believe that he had gained a splendid victory. To save his reputation, he resorted to many mean and ungenerous artifices. He arrested General Miñon, and endeavored to deprive him of his papers, and ordered a court martal because Miñon had not attacked the American batteries between Saltillo and Buena Vista, where no ground could be found to form the dragoons in column for a charge. Miñon imputed his arrest to the irritation of Santa

Anna, because he had censured his retreat; and to prevent unpleasant disclosures, had caused him to be imprisoned, endeavored to seize his papers, and to prevent all communication between him and his friends.

On the 25th of February, Santa Anna wrote to General Vasquez that he had fought during two whole days, and that the battle was most bloody. The Americans, he said, numbered 9000, and they had 26 pieces of cannon. "Blood," he continued, "ran in torrents, and the killed and wounded on both sides were three or four thousand." He boasted much of the success of his bayonet charges! No bayonet charge was made. The knife, indeed, was used to slaughter the wounded Americans who lay on the field incapable of resistance. He clamed as trophies two cannons and three guns, and insisted that he had driven the Americans from all their positions except Angostura, "the *Thermopylæ*" which saved them from utter defeat. To his Excellency Don Ramon Adame, he gave a significant hint to cause the triumph of his arms to be celebrated in his town. Even in the official report of the battle, this absurd and inflated man had the unblushing effrontery to close his communication in this manner: "The nation for which a triumph has been gained at the cost of so many sufferings, will learn that, if we were able to conquer in the midst of so many embarrassments, there will be no doubt of our final success in the struggle we sustain, if every spirit but rallies to the one sacred object of common defence." Not satisfied with promulgating falsehoods too gross and absurd for the credulity of any except Mexicans, this charlatan general and president caused couriers to precede him in his journey to the capital, announcing in every city and village a brilliant victory. "Bonfires and illuminations," says Carleton, "lit up every town and city from the Gulf of Mexico to the Pacific ocean. Fetes and balls, and merry peals of bells, and grand processions and orations, were the consequences of the report of a triumph, which flew through the length and breadth of the land;" and it is said that in the city of Mexico a *Te Deum* and a triumphal procession were ordered, in honor of Santa Anna's victory at Buena Vista!

In his military character, Santa Anna resembled a guerilla chief, rather than a scientific general. His military system included tricks, artifices, boasts, bluster, bullying and lies. General Miñon says, that he considered war "reduced to the fighting of the troops of one and the other party, wherever they met, and however they choose." "General Santa Anna," he continues, "believes that a battle is no more than a shock of men, with much noise, shouts and shots, to see who can do the most, each in his own way. General Santa Anna cannot conceive how it happens that a victory may be gained over an enemy, by wise and well calculated manœuvres." Santa Anna can hardly be said to have been deficient in courage: he lost a leg at Vera Cruz, and a horse was killed under him at Buena Vista; yet it was the courage of a guerillero—a fierce passion sometimes exaggerated into frensy, rather than the calm heroism of a scientific soldier. General Wool, with a temperament full as ardent and enthusiastic, never suffered his passions to betray his judgment; but amidst the direst perils of a battle, was always cool and collected. Santa Anna, however, had one advantage: he knew his country-

men well, and that they would swallow any falsehood, however palpable and gross, if it ministered to their vanity.

The loss of the Mexicans in the battle of Buena Vista, has been variously estimated. General Taylor reported 500 dead on the battle ground, and estimated their entire loss at 2000. General Wool's report varied as to the number of the dead. Santa Anna reported the entire loss of both armies at three or four thousand; and according to him, the Americans suffered most.

Of the Mexicans, Generals Lombardini, Juvera and Guzman, were wounded, and more than twenty colonels killed. It is evident that Santa Anna did not include any in his report but those who were killed, wounded, or captured on the battle field; without including those who were strewed along the roads, either dead or wounded, and those at the haciendas of Encantada, Encarnacion, and the haciendas beyond. It would be no exaggeration to estimate the loss of the Mexicans at 4000; yet whether the number was greater or less, it is of little consequence: the results only are to be considered. The military power of Mexico was prostrated, and its grand liberating army dispersed.

Amongst the many eminent men of whom Plutarch has written, it was his custom to select two with strong points of resemblance for comparison. This mode of shewing off eminent men in couples, although strange and fanciful, is not without its use; and Dr. Johnson did not disdain the example, when drawing his magnificent comparison between Dryden and Pope.

Many points of resemblance, both in character and fortune, are presented between General Wool and the revolutionary General Greene. Their parentage was different; for the father of Wool was a revolutionary soldier, and the father of Greene a quaker; but the earliest periods of their lives were passed in the humble obscurity of country towns, and amongst farmers. Greene began the business of life as a blacksmith, and Wool, as a trader. Both were untaught in the schools, and self-educated; both had the same passion for books and reading, and the same enthusiastic temperament, hasty but placable tempers, and gay and lively manners. Both were distinguished for fine persons, intellectual countenances, and soldierlike deportment. Like poets and painters, neither could resist the strong natural impulses which led the one from his anvil, and the other from his desk, to camps and battle-fields. Both acquired distinction early; both were abused by calumniators and detractors; both were compelled to encounter, at times, the hostility of the government, and both came forth from the controversies with fresher laurels and higher honors. Both felt a most imperious sense of their military duties, and were the most rigid of disciplinarians, benevolent in their feelings, but inflexible when justice demanded punishment. Both created efficient soldiers from raw militia men and volunteers; and by the force of energy, discipline, and a peculiar faculty for command, transformed disorderly mobs into regular armies. In some particulars their fortunes were different. Wool was never defeated; Greene never won a battle, but always, like Blucher, after defeat secured the fruits of a victory. Greene received a magnificent estate for his services, from the State of Georgia: Wool

received swords from the the city of Troy and the State of New York; but the magnanimous Congress of the United States overlooked him, when they lavished swords and medals on other heroes of the war.

In these days, when practical ability is made the test of merit, the fame of the self-made man supersedes the degrees of the universities and the certificates of West Point. General Wool is emphatically a self-made man. Every step of his promotion has been gained by substantial services, and nothing by favor. Feebly supported by professing and lukewarm friends, and opposed by calumniators and enemies, he has forced his way without faltering over the roughest paths of life with a firm step and a stout heart; and, without being trumpeted into a transient noteriety, has cut his path to glory with his own sword. Although he has been his own schoolmaster, yet it must not be understood that he disdains to swell the volume of his knowledge from the humblest as well as the highest sources. With all his self-reliance, he has no self-sufficiency. He never boasts, or swaggers, or blusters about his own exploits. His conversation respecting the transactions in which he has been engaged, is as plain, unexaggerated, unpretending, unclouded and concise, as one of the Duke of Wellington's dispatches.

A few days after the great battle, the troops at Saltillo and Agua Nueva were increased by the addition of two Ohio regiments, commanded by Colonels Curtis and Morgan. In an order published by General Wool, he says, "the two Ohio regiments which have joined since the battle of Buena Vista, are deserving of high praise for their good conduct, superior drill and excellent discipline; and judging from the gallantry shown by one of them in the affair with General Urrea, he does not doubt, should an opportunity offer, of which there is every probability, that these five regiments will do honor to themselves, their state, and their country."

Major General Taylor left Agua Nueva early in March, for Monterey; leaving General Wool in command of all the troops at Saltillo, and in advance of Monterey. Owing to the dust and high winds which prevailed at the time, General Wool on the 9th of March removed his troops from Agua Nueva, to his favorite position, Buena Vista.

In consequence of the supposed overwhelming force which General Santa Anna brought into the field, many of the inhabitants of Coahuila were induced to take up arms to aid him in driving, as he said, "the Goths and Vandals over the Rio Grande, if not the Sabine." The pledges of their chiefs, however, to General Wool that they would remain neutral, prevented them from joining in the battle of Buena Vista; and they kept themselves at a respectful distance, awaiting the result, no doubt determined to do the work of destruction should the Americans be defeated. Being disappointed in the result, and fearing harsh treatment on account of their violated pledges, they sued for pardon; assigning as a reason for taking up arms, that the forces of Santa Anna so far outnumbered the Americans, that their own safety required they should not only respect, but obey his orders and injunctions. General Wool, apprehensive in consequence of the capture at different times of large convoys of supplies, in all 179 wagons, loaded with corn, oats &c. from Camargo, for

the troops at Monterey and Saltillo, that his command might suffer for the want of forage, consented for the time being to overlook their conduct, on the conditions set forth in the following communication to Vice Governor Gonzales:

HEAD QUARTERS, BUENA VISTA, 18th March 1847.

"Sir: While marching my column from the Rio Grande to Parras, and from Parras to this place, I not only protected the Mexican people of the several towns through which I passed, in their persons, property and religion, but treated them with great consideration and kindness; at the same time, paid them liberally for all supplies furnished my troops. For these acts of kindness and liberality, the people promised perfect neutrality between the contending governments of the United States and Mexico.

"During the recent operations of Santa Anna against the arms of the United States, so far from the people of Santa Rosa, Monclova, Parras and Saltillo, adhering to their spontaneous pledges of neutrality, many of them were found embodied in arms against us, led on by the Aguires, Blancos, and others of equal standing, who were foremost in their pledges and promises of neutrality.

"For this gross ingratitude, to give it no harsher term, for so much kindness manifested towards the Mexican people, an atonement must be immediately made by the inhabitants of the several towns above named, or they will be considered enemies and treated accordingly. The best evidence of their repentance for their violated pledges and promises, made to me in person through their civil chiefs, will be to furnish the army of the United States with corn, flour, barley, &c., which, if promptly done, will be liberally paid for. Any delay, however, in furnishing the supplies required, will be considered not only as an additional evidence of the disregard of their promises, but of continued hostile intentions against the arms of the United States, and will meet with the punishment which such conduct justly merits."

General Wool transmitted this communication to Major Warren, Governor of Saltillo, with the following letter of instruction:

HEAD QUARTERS, BUENA VISTA, March 18th, 1847.

"Sir: Herewith I transmit a communication to the vice governor: after you have read it, please send it to him. Say to him that I have sent out for corn this morning; and all that is taken by the party in search, will not be paid for. If the people of Saltillo intend to atone for those of the citizens who appeared in arms against us, they will immediately adopt measures to compel those having corn to bring it to us, when a fair and just price will be paid for it: no delay, however, will be tolerated. My orders must be immediately complied with, as well by the people of Saltillo as by those of Parras and Monclova, or they will be considered enemies and treated accordingly. They will be punished for their violated pledges, unless they comply at once with my orders.

"You will not allow Mexicans coming from the interior to enter or remain a moment in Saltillo, without reporting in person for examination. If they are at all suspicious persons, confine them. We can have no half-way measures at this time with these people. They have violated the most solemn pledges of neutrality, and therefore no favor ought

to be shown them, if they in the slightest degree disregarded my injunctions.

"Let the vice-governor know this, as well as the all alcaldes of the neighboring villages."

These measures, together with the arrest of the vice-governor and the collector Ybarra, who were afterwards released on giving security for their future good behavior, produced an ample supply of corn and barley for the command.

The result of the battle of Buena Vista having dissipated the apprehensions of the people of the United States for the safety of Generals Taylor and Wool and their army, their rejoicings were unbounded, and were exhibited throughout the country in illuminations, bonfires, meetings and resolutions. Their proceedings were transmitted to Taylor and Wool, with letters of congratulation from all classes of citizens. Among others to General Wool, were those of the legislature of New York, and of his friends the Trojans, expressive of their high appreciation of his services, and especially of his conduct in the battle of Buena Vista. In reply to the citizens of Troy, he remarked, "I can scarcely imagine that my humble efforts, whether in battle or otherwise, can claim for me those feelings so generously and magnanimously expressed, as well by the common council as by the citizens of Troy. They cannot fail to stimulate the soldier to greater exertions to sustain the honor, the interest and the glory of our common country. If I have so conducted myself in the discharge of the important and responsible duties confided to me, as to deserve the approbation of my countrymen, and especially of those with whom I have so long resided, and with whose interest and welfare all my better feelings are entwined, I shall consider myself amply rewarded for all the toil, privations, hardships and dangers, to which I have been exposed."

Colonel Doniphan having arrived from Chihuahua on his way to the States, General Wool reviewed his regiment on the 22d of May: after which he published a complimentary order, in which he said, "No troops can point to a more brilliant career than those commanded by Colonel Doniphan; and no one will ever hear of the battles of Braceto and Sacramento, without a feeling of admiration for the men who gained them. The State of Missouri has just cause to be proud of the achievements of the men who have represented her in the army against Mexico; and she will receive them on their return, with all the joy and satisfaction which a due appreciation of their merits and services so justly entitle them." The day after the review, Colonel Doniphan, with his regiment, took up his line of march for the Brazos, taking with him his trophies, including ten brass cannon.

The term of service for which the volunteers of 1846 engaged had nearly expired, and consequently they were anxious to return to the States. Of these, during the month of May, the Kentucky foot, the Ohio regiments (except Colonel Curtis), the Indiana brigade, the 1st and 2d Illinois regiments, and the Kentucky and Arkansas cavalry took their departure for their distant homes. With great reluctance General Wool parted with these troops, who had served their country so long and so well. "Few could boast of longer marches or greater hardships, and none

of greater gallantry in the field." Their places were supplied by the 2d Mississippi, the Virginia and North Carolina regiments, which were ably commanded by Colonels Hamtramck, Paine and Davis.

Colonel Curtis of the 2nd Ohio regiment remained, and was appointed Governor of Saltillo, and relieved Lieut. Colonel Warren of the 1st Illinois regiment, whose conduct, with that of captains Morgan and Prentiss and their companies, commanded on all occasions the approbation of General Wool.

During the month of June, little else was done than to make reconnoissances at a distance, in order to ascertain the movements of the enemy, and to check the machinations of individuals. Governor Aguire, who was a devoted adherent of Gen. Santa Anna, was continually engaged in raising guerrillas, who annoyed the American convoys between Saltillo and Parras. Hence, General Wool sent parties frequently to Parras, Mazapil and other places, to hold these robbers in check, and to prevent supplies being sent to the Mexican army.

The fourth of July was celebrated at Buena Vista: national salutes were fired at the several stations, and the troops, about 3000 strong, were reviewed by General Wool. After the review, the general partook of an elegant dinner, given by the officers of the Virginia regiment, when appropriate toasts were drank. The whole ceremony was imposing, and made a deep impression upon the Mexicans.

Governor Aguire, in his efforts to serve Santa Anna, and in order to provide means for raising guerrillas, issued a proclamation calling together the legislature of Coahuila, to assemble at Monclova. To meet and check this movement, General Wool published the following circular to the people of Coahuila:

HEAD QUARTERS, BUENA VISTA, 25th July, 1847.

"Sir: It is reported that Governor Aguire has called a meeting of the deputies of the State of Coahuila at Monclova, for the purpose of adopting measures to resist the arms of the United States, and especially to organize guerrilla parties. I give no credence to these reports: still it is possible that the governor, whose office is defunct in consequence of the state being occupied by the army of the United States, may be indiscreet enough to do an act which might bring, not only upon the people of Monclova, but of the whole state, measures which would prove no less prejudicial than destructive to their best interests.

"It is, therefore, that I would notify you and the people of Coahuila, that any obedience or favor shown to any proclamation, summons or order from Governor Aguire, for the above purposes or any other, will be regarded as a violation of their neutrality, so often and so solemnly pledged to the undersigned, and will meet with the punishment such conduct justly merits. Guerrilla parties, or those who encourage them, and which I deem but highway robbers under another name, will receive no favor at the hands of the soldiers of the United States: they will be executed wherever found."

This circular was sent by General Wool to all the prefects and towns in the state. He also sent a company of dragoons to Parras to enforce obedience to his circular, and, if practicable, to take Governor Aguire prisoner. The deputies refused to obey his orders, and consequently did

not meet; and Aguire fled to San Luis de Potosi, and quiet was restored to Coahuila.

Brigadier General Cushing reported to General Wool on the 17th July, and was assigned to the command of the volunteers. He remained until the 20th August, when he was ordered to join the southern line under the immediate command of General Scott. On taking leave, General Wool paid him the following compliment: "The great zeal, promptness and ability, with which you have discharged the duties assigned to you since you have been under my command, give assurance that in whatever position you may be found, the interest and honor of our country will be ably and gallantly sustained."

From this period, until the time when he succeeded to the command of the army of occupation by the departure of General Taylor to the United States, but little occurred of general interest. The country was in the main tranquil; only being disturbed by occasional depredations of the guerrillas, which, though annoying to our troops when in small bodies, did not make their appearance in sufficiently large force to create any uneasiness. The effect of the battle of Buena Vista still hung upon the whole of the northern country; and the feeling of weakness produced by their defeat, made the richer and more influential of the Mexicans careful how they lent themselves openly to any hostile measures; and little was or could be accomplished by the murderous guerrillas, unpaid and unprotected by a central power. Still this was by no means an idle period to the commanders of our army. However quiet affairs appeared on the surface, an unceasing vigilance was necessary, to keep our own people as well as the Mexicans in order; and the letter book of General Wool affords ample testimony of the great amount of labor he was called upon to perform. The internal affairs of the country were to be regulated, duties collected, robbers hunted up and dealt with: these, besides the care of our own troops, were sufficient to keep the mind of General Wool constantly occupied.

On being informed by General Taylor that he would shortly quit the country on a leave of absence, when the command would devolve on him, General Wool, being long convinced that a forward movement could be executed with advantage, wrote the following letter to the Secretary of War, urging that measure. This movement was never made; but the letter is here inserted, because of its just views of the policy which ought to have been followed:

HEAD QUARTERS, CAMP BUENA VISTA, 11th October, 1847.

"Sir: If peace should not take place within a few weeks, and, from all I can learn, it will not until we take possession of all the important cities in the republic, should not a forward movement be made on this line? Under the existing state of affairs in the republic, with 4000 men I could take San Luis de Potosi, Zacatecas, Durango or Queretaro. Taking these cities could not fail to aid General Scott in his operations, and if necessary, these forces could unite with him. With a reinforcement of 2000 men, and certainly with 3000, I could so arrange the troops and posts on this line as to be able to move on those cities with four or five thousand men. With 4000 men, if left to my discretion, I would not

hesitate to march on either or all of them. By such a movement, all the northern provinces would be kept in subjection.

"These suggestions are made, however, without being acquainted with the plan of future operations in Mexico. Whatever the plan may be, if it is the intention of the government to prosecute the war in the interior of the country, the movement suggested could not in anywise affect it injuriously. A forward movement seems to be absolutely necessary, if we would profit by our victories. It is no less necessary to prevent the central government from recruiting their armies in the north, than it is to keep the volunteers from disbanding. They have become exceedingly impatient at the idea of remaining merely on the defensive. * * *

"In fifteen days I can march to either San Luis Potosi, Zacatecas or Durango. It may be necessary, on account of supplies, to go by Zacatecas, to reach San Luis. This route would require twenty days. If necessary, from this point (Saltillo), I could march to the city of Mexico in 30 or 35 days. Beef, flour and corn, can be obtained in abundance on the route; at least such is my information."

General Wool, on the 27th October, after leaving special instructions for his government with Colonel Hamtramck, on whom devolved the charge of the troops in and about Saltillo, proceeded to Monterey for the purpose of relieving General Taylor in the command of the Army of Occupation, where he arrived on the 29th. On the 25th of November, General Taylor issued the following order:

HEAD QUARTERS, ARMY OF OCCUPATION, BRAZOS ISLAND, Nov. 25, 1847.

"Order No. 132. I. Major General Taylor, having received leave of absence from the Department of War, relinquishes the command of the Army of Occupation. It devolves upon Brigadier General Wool, to whose head quarters all commanders and all chiefs of the staff department will in future render their reports.

"II. It is with no ordinary regret that the general now takes leave of the troops of his command. A few veteran companies of dragoons and artillery have served under his eye, on fields rendered illustrious by their gallantry, and that of their comrades: other corps need but the opportunity, to signalize their bravery and their discipline. To all, officers and men of the line and of the staff departments, the general would express his satisfaction with their present instruction and efficiency, and his confidence, that under the orders of the distinguished general who succeeds to the command, they will zealously maintain the interests and honor of the country."

This order was not received at Monterey until the 8th December. On the next day, General Wool issued the following order:

On the 9th day of December, 1847, General Wool assumed the command of the Army of Occupation, established his head quarters at Monterey, and issued the following order:

"The order of General Taylor, No. 132, places the undersigned in the command of the Army of Occupation.

"On entering upon the important duties assigned him, he would announce to his command, that no efforts on his part will be spared, to place it in the most efficient condition, in order to be prepared to meet

any movement which may be required. In these efforts, he anticipates to be ably sustained by his troops, and especially by his officers.

"The people of the United States are anxiously looking in this direction for an honorable termination of the war. The victories so glorious to our arms at Palo Alto, Resaca de la Palma, Monterey, Buena Vista, Vera Cruz, Cerro Gordo, Contreras, Cherubusco and the city of Mexico, have failed to produce the desired result. Mexican armies, one after another, have been beaten and dispersed, and their capital taken; yet the Mexicans would continue the war. As peace, from all we can learn, appears far in the distance, we are called upon to prepare for coming events Pleasure must give way to duty; our whole duty, and nothing but our duty. Obedience, order, discipline and instruction, must be rigidly enforced, which the interest, honor and glory of our country imperiously demand.

"All orders hitherto issued by General Taylor, will be enforced until otherwise directed."

On the 17th December, 1847, General Wool published the following order, No. 11:

"The war on the part of the United States, hitherto, has been conducted towards the people of Mexico with great forbearance and moderation. Private property, and the religious institutions of the country, have been held sacred; and those who remained neutral and abstained from taking up arms against us, have been treated with kindness: whilst on several occasions we have not only fed their famishing soldiers, but bound up their wounds. By a series of brilliant victories, one army after another has been defeated and dispersed, and the citadel of Mexico taken; and yet instead of laying contributions on the inhabitants for the support of our armies, we have continued to pay fair, and even extraordinary prices, for whatever we have received from them. And what has been our return? Treachery and cruelty have done their worst against us: our citizens and soldiers have been murdered and their bodies mutilated, in cold blood, by bands of savage and cowardly guerillas: and the parol of honor, sacred in all civilized warfare, has been habitually forfeited by Mexican officers and soldiers.

"Such infamous and nefarious conduct will not be tolerated. Whilst it will afford us pleasure to extend protection to the innocent and unoffending Mexican—he that remains strictly neutral, and does not take up arms against the United States—those who countenance or encourage directly or indirectly the bandits who infest the country, and who are called guerillas, must be made to feel the evils of war. Individuals will be severely punished, and heavy contributions levied upon the inhabitants of all cities, towns, villages and haciendas, who either harbor them or furnish them with supplies, or who do not give information of their haunts or places of abode.

"To carry out more effectually this order, the alcaldes or other authorities throughout New Leon, Coahuila, and that portion of Tamaulipas at present in the occupation of the troops of the United States, will forthwith organize police parties for the purpose of ferreting out and bringing to the nearest American military post, for punishment, all offenders herein alluded to. On failing to do so, each and all will be held personally

responsible for all damages done to either Americans or Mexicans, or other persons; whilst heavy contributions will be levied upon the inhabitants where the injury or damage may have been committed.

"Merchants, whether Americans or Mexicans, Spaniards, or of other nations, who may hereafter pay tribute to Canales, or to any other person in command of banditti or guerilla parties, to insure the safe transportation of their goods or other property to any part of Mexico, will be identified with those parties, and punished with the utmost severity, whilst their goods will be seized and confiscated for the benefit of the United States.

"Commanders of districts or posts belonging to the Army of Occupation will forthwith adopt measures to have this order carried out promptly, and to the fullest extent."

This simple order of General Wool produced a magical effect. The editor of the Monterey Gazette, in an article (February 5th) says: "We have much cause to reflect on the reason why we have heard of so few robberies on this line, since General Wool took the command here." "From the good faith which has endeared him to the Mexicans, and his impartial decisions where contending parties were concerned, firmly impressed them (as it has done all others) of his stern character and powerful intellect. Thus all orders or commands emanating from him, were appreciated and obeyed. The Mexicans knew that all such should and would be enforced. In consequence of which, after publishing a short time back his order No. 11, relative to guerillas, &c. on this line, a total revolution has almost immediately taken place. That formidable and dangerous band which prowled upon our steps like so many tigers, since our first entry into this city, have, by one simple order from General Wool, been effectually appalled, and, we might add, totally deranged and dispersed; and now in place of breathing defiance in our ears, instead of watching for our property and our lives, they sue for terms, and they ask General Wool for terms of peace. Such is the fact, strange as it may seem; and this great and important change has been brought about solely from the moral influence which the mighty mind of the hero of Buena Vista has acquired over them. There are now scarcely any robbers about."

The editor then proceeds to narrate some instances of General Wool's mode of operation. A party of robbers entered Salines: the general exacted a fine of $500 from the town; but it being proved that the alcalde was connected with the robbers, he made him pay the whole of the sum to the citizens from whom he had exacted it. A Mexican was robbed of $80; and General Wool taxed the place where the robbery was committed, for his renumeration. On another occasion, two Mexicans were robbed by some guerillas of $400 worth of goods. A party of dragoons was sent in pursuit of the robbers, with instructions, if they could not be found, to discover, if practicable, those who harbored them, and compel them to refund the amount to the Mexicans who had been robbed. This was done. The three examples effectually checked all further robberies by the Mexican guerillas. The citizens themselves put down those parties, as well as all marauders and highway robbers. It became their interest to do so; for they were held responsible, and made

to pay for all injuries and damages committed by such parties. In the city of Monterey, the quarter-master's department had been robbed of a large amount in tools, and was reduced to the last anvil. The robbers and the receiver of the stolen property were discovered. The quarter-master was required to render an account of all that were stolen, with the Mexican prices affixed. The receiver of the stolen property was a man of standing and property, in the city. He was required to pay Mexican prices for all that had been stolen, one hundred dollars fine, and to give security for all that might in future be stolen. This measure prevented all further robberies in the city. All which was in accordance with the Mexican law and practice.

The prompt measures of General Wool, in suppressing the war of depredation between Monterey and Camargo, carried on by guerrillas and highway robbers, had prevented Canales, their distinguished chief, and a person of great boldness and enterprise as well as profligacy, from plundering the people, and from levying contributions from the traders who transported merchandize along the line. The means of Canales being exhausted, he could neither keep his bands together, nor recruit them. These measures, together with the mild and conciliatory course of General Wool, quieted the people, who, although under the rule of a general, for the first time enjoyed the privileges of a free government in its great essentials, the protection of persons and property, and the consciousness of security in both, by the preservation of the public peace and the general tranquillity. Under these circumstances, an attempt was made to negotiate, on the basis of a project for revolutionizing the States of Tamaulipas, Coahuila, and New Leon, and forming a separate republic under the protection of the United States, or to annex them to the American Union. General Wool, not having authority to make any stipulations on the basis proposed, and anxious to save the American government from all embarrassments which might delay a peace, and subject the administration to the accusations of violated faith, did no more than transmit the propositions to Washington, and return to the individuals who made the proposals, the following communication, dated at Monterey, February 3d, 1848:

"I had the honor to receive, last evening, your communication of the 30th ultimo.

"In answer thereto, I can only observe, that, should it be the desire of the people and State of Tamaulipas, to declare themselves independent of the Central Government of Mexico; and should they do so, at the same time lay down their arms, and withdraw from the contest now waged between the United States and Mexico, and their declaration and acts be duly authenticated by the proper authorities, and transmitted to me, I will lose no time in forwarding them to the President of the United States, for his consideration and orders in the case. In giving these assurances, it is to be distinctly understood, that the government of the United States is in no wise to be compromited by the measure proposed, which might embarrass it with the Central Government of Mexico, who, it is rumored, have appointed commissioners to negotiate a peace with the United States.

"It is proper, at the same time to say, that I cannot relax in the dis-

charge of any duties imposed upon me by my government, either as it regards the operation of the forces under my command, or in the collection of the revenues of the country over which I have control. I will, nevertheless, as hitherto, respect the persons and property of all those who are strictly neutral, and who do not directly or indirectly make war upon the troops or citizens of the United States.

"It is also proper to remark, that I can in no wise refrain from carrying out the measures which I have adopted, to suppress all guerrillas and highway robbers. Yet, all those who will lay down their arms, and give satisfactory assurances that they will not again take them up to resist the troops of the United States, and will remain quiet and preserve a strict neutrality, will be permitted to return to their homes, and pursue their ordinary occupations unmolested.

"With considerations of high respect,
"I have the honor to be, sir,
"Your obedient servant,
"JOHN E. WOOL,
"Commanding."

As the prospects of peace seemed to brighten, no negotiations on the subject proposed were renewed.

The States of Coahuila, Tamaulipas, and New Leon, were as much under the authority of the United States, as any State of the American Union. The people were tranquil and satisfied. Their social condition was amended, and taxes paid with little reluctance. An interior police was established under the direction of the Mexican alcaldes, whose authority was strengthened by the military support of the Americans. No robbers infested the highways; no disorders were known, except such as were committed by deserters from the American army, discharged teamsters, &c. The police of the cities and towns, under military occupation, was perfect. No broils occurred in the gambling houses and liquor shops. Females and unarmed persons could traverse the streets at all hours of the night without danger of insult or violence; and none of the midnight murders, robberies, and secret assassinations, which had ever been a scandal and reproach to the Mexican cities, were known. The prompt and vigorous measures of General Wool, and his sagacious system of aiding the civil police by military authority, and making the cities, towns, and ranches, responsible for all violences and wrongs committed within their limits, produced as great a change amongst the people over whom his authority was extended, as was effected in England in the days of Saxon supremacy by King Alfred. In writing to a friend (Feb. 16th), General Wool says: "The great majority of the nation are descendants of the Aztec race, with here and there a sprinkling of the Spanish blood. They are poor, ignorant, and lazy. They will not work, unless compelled. Hence, a few men, including the priests, in every state, govern. As our expenditures are large, and as we pay much more for labor than the Mexican gentlemen or proprietors have been in the habit of doing, it would be no difficult task to revolutionize the Northern States, at least four or five of them." "I think the people, as far as the influence of the military extends, and even far beyond, are disposed to submit quietly to the exactions required by the United States;"

although they had endeavored on all occasions to evade the taxes imposed by their own government, whose system of taxation was too complicated and difficult to manage to be satisfactory, which occasioned many complaints of hardship and injustice.

In a letter to General Cass, then a senator of the United States, he says: "The judicial tribunals, since the war, have been broken up in this section of the country; consequently, much is left to the discretion of the military commander. So far as Tamaulipas, New Leon, and Coahuila are concerned, my administration gives perfect satisfaction. The people, generally, are quiet and obedient, and appear to be disposed to submit without murmuring to the taxes imposed by order of the President. Indeed, we are apparently as much at peace as we would be in the United States. The guerrillas have disappeared, and few or no robberies are committed by Mexicans." But the American deserters had been guilty of many enormities: on their way from Saltillo to the Rio Grande, they had not only plundered the inhabitants of horses, money, plate, jewelry, but ravished women, two of whom had died in consequence of their brutality. They had robbed a person friendly to the Americans of $18·00, and levied a contribution of $500 on a small village. "It is these parties," continued the General, "that make guerrillas, and cause us a great deal of trouble."

Having tranquilized the country under his jurisdiction, the general deemed it expedient to relax the severity of his original order; and to give to the Mexicans convincing proof that he had no disposition to treat them with harshness, unless their own conduct should make it necessary, issued, on the 26th of February, the order No. 66, declaring an amnesty, which was in the following terms:

"Many of the inhabitants of the villages and farms destroyed in the course of the war, having petitioned to be permitted to return to their homes, the General commanding, with the view of giving them security, and of restoring more perfect order and quiet to the country under his control, deems it expedient and proper to declare a general amnesty for all those belonging the country occupied by this army, who may have heretofore been in arms against the United States.

"All such who may return to cultivating their fields, tending their flocks and herds, and pursuing peaceably their ordinary avocations, and who may comply with such orders as may be given them, will be protected in their persons and property.

"Commanders of posts, detachments and escorts, will see this order rigidly observed in spirit and letter, by all under their command."

In fact, the destruction of some ranches had forced the homeless inhabitants in some instances into the hands of Canales for subsistence. General Wool, in writing to Colonel Butler, says: "Order 66 was to draw from him (Canales) his followers; at least those who had joined him because they had been driven, by the force of circumstances, from their homes and farms. I was informed many would abandon him, if they could be allowed to return and rebuild their houses, and cultivate their farms. Since my order of amnesty, fifteen families are reported as having returned, and are engaged in rebuilding their houses between

this and Camargo. From the information I have received, I anticipate the most favorable results.

"The course I am now pursuing, is the one I have pursued ever since I crossed the Rio Grande. Thus far it has proved highly beneficial, and hitherto has not failed to neutralize the inhabitants and preserve the peace of the country, over which I hold sway.

"You must not, however, imagine that I am the less vigilant, from any thing that has passed between Canales and myself. Far from it: I know the man, and I am ever watchful. I trust you will not permit him to surprise you."

Gonzales, a noted guerilla, having been captured by Colonel Butler, General Wool alluded to the circumstance. "Although my orders," said he, "are that no quarters shall be shown to guerillas or highway robbers; yet if one is taken prisoner, I would not have him executed without due reflection, and a careful examination of his case. The Secretary of War has not yet settled the question, whether or not the guerrilla system of warfare is a legitimate one. So far as I am acquainted with his opinions, they do not go beyond expressing doubts as to its legitimacy. Hence I would hesitate before I would execute a guerrilla; more especially if, when taken, he was not found resisting our arms."

It certainly had now become a matter of the first necessity, that the Secretary should have made up his mind on this question; for since the capture of the city of Mexico, the character of the war was entirely changed, and, on the part of the Mexicans, was carried out entirely by guerillas and highway robbers. On the northern line they had been suppressed by the prompt and rigorous measures of General Wool; but on the southern, General Lane was constantly engaged in conducting a partizan warfare against this description of force, in which he acquired much distinction. In fact no discrimination could be made. The robber was sometimes a guerilla, and the guerilla sometimes a robber. Their enterprises were stimulated by no sentiment of patriotism, or with any view to the national defence; but plunder was the sole object, and, by the usages of all nations when belligerent, they were not of right entitled to the privileges of prisoners of war. The military commanders, from motives of policy or extenuating circumstances in individual cases, might relax the rule and extend indulgences.

The American general found in the delicious climate of Monterey, some compensation for the severity of his labors, and his almost sleepless vigilance. "Last evening" (Feb. 15th), says he, "I walked out to make a few visits. The air was filled with the perfume of the orange and lemon blossoms. The sky was clear, which is seldom otherwise; and the moon, nearly full, made the night almost as light as day. A more delightful evening I have never experienced, so far as climate could make it so. At every door that I passed, the families and inmates were regaling themselves in front of their houses with the delightful fragrance of the night. The winter climate of Monterey is certainly a charming one. We have had no frost since the early part of December, and that was only a white frost; and no cold, rainy or sleety weather. We have had a few days of rain in this month, the first in nine months; but the weather was warm and agreeable."

Indeed in this delighful climate, with an atmosphere pure, healthy, and filled with odors of the tropical region, and entirely free from its pestilential *miasmata*, it might well be said with the poet, "All save the spirit of man, is divine." To ameliorate that spirit, the general took some prompt measures, by "clearing out the gamblers and shutting up the tippling shops." In a letter to Adjutant General Jones of the War Department at Washington, he says: "I can venture to assert that no city in the United States can boast of as much order, quiet and good feeling, as apparently exists in the city of Monterey;" and this might in some measure be attributed to the stringent instructions which the general issued to the provost-marshal on the 15th of February. "The provost-marshal," said he, "will hereafter have charge of all prisoners confined under guard. He will enter their names and crimes, and names of those by whom the charges may have been preferred against them, in a book kept for that purpose; and whenever a prisoner is released or discharged, he will note it opposite his name, stating at the same time by whose authority it is done.

"He will have special charge of the patrol stationed within the main guard. It will be subject to his orders, making such tours, and seizing and confining all such persons as he may think proper. He will make daily reconnoisances of the city and the dragoon camp in its vicinity, to prevent the commission of all misdemeanors and crimes, and to apprehend all who may be guilty of breaches of good order and military discipline.

"He will make frequent visits to such parts or places of the city and immediate vicinity, where such occurrences are most likely to happen, and will exercise in the performance of his duty the greatest vigilance and activity.

"He will take cognizance of the conduct of all followers and retainers of the camp, as well as of soldiers.

"All depredators, plunderers, gamblers, drunkards, and others guilty of disorderly conduct, will be apprehended and imprisoned.

"Gambling houses and tippling houses, not licensed, will be broken up, and their owners arrested and duly punished.

"The names of all persons confined by his authority, or by that of others, will be reported to head quarters every morning, for such action as may be thought proper.

"The provost-marshal will be subject to the orders of the commanding general."

The 16th regiment of infantry, commanded by Colonel Tibbets, formerly a representative in the Congress of the United States, had been posted in the city, and the colonel constituted its governor; but having gone on military business to Saltillo, General Wool was obliged to perform the double duty of commander of the Army of Occupation, and governor of the city, which kept him occupied from six in the morning to twelve at night.

[From the Newport (Kentucky) Daily News, Feb. 1850.]

Below we give an extract from a letter written by a late officer in the army, while stationed at Monterey, to his friends in this city. This extract will be found interesting to our readers:

The view from the Bishop's palace is one of unrivalled beauty and grandeur. Nature has been lavish of her gifts—the high mountains and luxuriant valleys, the fragrant shrubs and rippling streams. To look abroad from this crumbling, yet still splendid relic of the past, as from a natural observatory, upon the magnificence around, does not fail to excite the most exquisite sensations of pleasure. A soft balmy air, wafted from the mountains which almost encircle you as in an embrace, serves to fit you for the enjoyment of so much that is altogether lovely. A bright sun lights up the Saddle Mountains, and casts a glow upon the western peaks; then declining, appears to tarry above the rugged architecture of nature, converting the towers, battlements and spires of the mountains into a mass of burnished gold. From the valleys below these rise one upon another "mountain piled upon mountain," until they become to you, as Byron says, "a feeling." What a glorious superstructure, and upon what a beautiful foundation of valleys irrigated by an hundred streams, clear and pellucid as the Chrystal Mountain Springs, from which they rise, and shaded by groves of orange and lemon and pomegranate, laden with fruits, and fragrant with perfume! Then in the distance, bright and beautiful, your eye lights upon the fair city of Monterey, with its thousand snow white houses; its gardens, its plazas and fountains, its churches and its towers; the famous garden of Arista, below you; on either side, the cathedral, fort, and the old time-worn chapel of the Franciscans. The remembrance of such a scene would be cherished by any one: an American could never forget it. When I first looked upon this scene, I had no thought of myself or my country; but when the gush of admiration had subsided, and the stars and stripes of our proud flag caught my eye waving over the residence of the commander of the Army of Occupation, a glow of honest pride lit up my face, and I thanked God I was an American, and that he had endowed my own country with so much to love and venerate.

And surely an American has just reason to be proud—proud of his country, of her institutions, of her great men, of her great victories, both civil and military. We think more of these subjects here than you do at home. It is a part of the study of arms, and this is our business. It is the great incentive we have to exertion; and on this only we hope to attain distinction. Apart from the scene of strife and trials of war, you cannot form a correct estimate of the characters engaged. Political considerations may have influence with you to elevate one unduly, to depress another unfairly, or it may be to pass a third by with silent and almost damning praise. This has been the course pursued in the United States by many party men and party papers. Taylor, Scott and Wool, are the leading heroes of this war. The first two we have seen, as party dictated, raised or depressed; while the latter, because separate from party factions, has failed to receive that just meed which is his due. Both the political friends and enemies of Taylor and Scott have contributed to their reputation. It would appear that because Wool has no political

aspirations or political enemies, he therefore need have no friends. How unjust, how ungenerous such a course! His modest merit, his talents, his patriotism, and his public services, point him out as a future President, to rule the destinies and guard the liberties of the freemen of our glorious Republic, to the defence of which he dedicated his life when but a youth; poured out his blood upon the altar of his country's honor, and bared his breast to his country's foes.

For forty years, General Wool has been before the world in a public capacity; and in this period he has rendered his name illustrious, by his exalted patriotism and brilliant achievements in war. Queenston Heights, Beekmantown Roads, and the mountains of Buena Vista, have testified his devotion and unsurpassed valor. Nor has the fire of his zeal passed away with his youthful days. His last triumphs are worthy the name acquired by his valor during the late struggle with England. Many winters have whitened his head; but they could not cool the zeal, energy and vigor which he continues to exhibit, which now often brings the blush of shame to cheeks yet unwrinkled by age.

General Wool left his home in 1846, and repaired to the west, where he organized a force of some 7000 volunteers, scattered over the States of Ohio, Indiana, Illinois, Missouri and Tennessee, in the almost incredible short period of six weeks. Without delay he embarked for Mexico, and made the most remarkable march on record, in the history of this war. He left San Antonio, Texas, with a force of 3000 men, nearly all raw volunteers, and penetrated the very heart of the enemy's country, reaching Parras about the 5th of December, 1846, without having fired a single gun. It reflects the highest honor upon the general, that although he commanded undisciplined troops, many, wild and unmanageable at home, who entered the army from an adventurous spirit, he, by his thorough system of military discipline, successfully resisted every outrage upon the inhabitants of Mexico; and instead of producing feelings of increased hostility among the people, by his marked urbanity, the generous protection he extended to the peaceable, the unquestioned justice of his proceedings in criminal cases, succeeded in neutralizing all, and winning the friendship and confidence of the many. He read the character of the people with whom he had to contend, at a glance; found them generally ignorant, base and treacherous, ruled by fear or profit; with no settled form of government, and submissive to no previous rule or law. Remaining some time in the State of Coahuila, here he formed a junction with General Taylor's army: he suppressed, captured and dispersed, in a manner peculiar to himself, and suited to his great enterprise, guerilla parties, and left an impress upon the people which still remains.

Passing over the great events which immediately followed his junction with General Taylor, the glorious part he sustained in the brilliant victory at Buena Vista, which has covered him with honor, we find Gen. Wool succeeding his illustrious compatriot in command of the Army of Occupation, with his head quarters at this place. We do not wish to disparage the great services of his illustrious predecessor, but simply state the fact, that when the command was turned over to General Wool, the States of New Leon and Tamaulipas were infested by large bands

of guerrillas and highway robbers; the trains were almost daily attacked, and the army supplies were not unfrequently cut off; marauding parties dogged our persons and property; murders were an every day occurrence. How is it now? These parties, that even so late as September were bold enough to attack a regiment, have been hunted down, disarmed, punished and dispersed, and a single horseman may now ride without fear of molestation from Saltillo to Camargo. General Wool's orders are obeyed promptly by all the inhabitants of the three States of New Leon, Coahuila and Tamaulipas. Military contributions to the amount of some $50,000 have been exacted and paid; and in this city, so full is the confidence in him, that a timid girl of sixteen may walk alone at dead of night, from the bishop's palace to the queen's bridge, without fear of insult. Such order is not to be found in any of the cities of the United States. Yet perhaps the highest eulogy comes from these people themselves. Debased and proscribed as they have been, they have yet, under General Wool's administration, their visitation of liberty, law and order; and ask to be protected in a declaration of their independence, or to become a star in the constitution of American States.

But a rumor of peace is heard, and with it we have an armistice, which paralyzes the hand of justice, by which these people have been governed; and soon, it is thought, the army will be recalled from Mexico.

A sad picture has been presented to us. When our troops shall be withdrawn, and the present controversy ended, what a spectacle will be presented to the world! Individual ambition and party madness will grapple for power; procrastinated hope will revive with a last, death-like struggle, and the already down-trodden population will writhe under the lash of their own despotic rulers. The people being themselves ignorant and treacherous, and only ruled by military power, have nothing to hope for in the future. Civil discord and internal revolution must succeed the withdrawal of the American forces.

No wonder, then, that so many cry out against *a consummation*, so devoutly wished by us—peace! They have received at the hands of the present military ruler, stern but evenhanded justice, and are backward to exchange their present situation for one of such vast uncertainty. They know that if they are guilty of crime, punishment is certain; and should they demand justice, the poor against the rich, or the rich against the poor, they are confident it will be meted out to them. Thus they are restrained from evil, and emulated to acts as noble as their natures will admit. But what will be the fate of this degraded nation? Their past history teaches us to fear that the mass of the people will, by becoming the tools of faction, become traitors to their country. Discomfiture, ruin and contempt, will alone be left them.

Oh! for some god-like patriot, with knowledge and power equal to the great crisis, to snatch the Republic of Mexico from the destruction which threatens her; to banish superstition and intolerance from the minds of the people; to plant in their stead wisdom, virtue and true patriotism; and fit them to receive, support and obey, just laws and free institutions, moulded after her sister republic, our own glorious country! I fear the hope is vain; the prayer will not be heard.

Much censure had fallen upon General Wool for the severity of his discipline, his stern and overbearing deportment, and his inflexibility of purpose; but some who had good opportunities of forming correct opinions, have taken a very different view of his character in this respect. An officer of high rank and standing, in a letter from Saltillo, after paying a just tribute to his military merits, says, "I have just been reading a complimentary notice of Gen. Wool, in the Rough and Ready Annual or Military Souvenir for 1848. This paper is highly complimentary to General Wool, pays him many just compliments, and bestows upon him much just praise; but the writer falls into an error which I have observed to be quite prevalent. In the conclusion of the article, the writer remarks: In some respects the general's attention to order and discicipline is carried too far; and a common complaint against him, is on account of a harsh overbearing deportment to both officers and men. Is it not strange that such an idea as this should have gone abroad, and have been so extensively disseminated? Such, however, is the case; and I confess that I myself had the same impression, before I had the pleasure of his acquaintance. Since then I have became wholly convinced of my error, insomuch that I am astonished now that such an erroneous impression could have ever existed in the mind of anybody. I have seen much of him at Buena Vista and Monterey. I have seen him, and remarked him under almost every variety of circumstance: on review, in council, and at the social board. I have observed him closely, and have never witnessed the slightest exhibition of such a trait of character. On the contrary, I have observed in him every mark of courtesy and kindness towards his officers; and it is a remarkable fact in the history of the general, that he never inflicted an improper punishment upon his men, nor reported an officer except for the purpose of speaking in his praise. I am inclined to think that much of this erroneous impression has resulted from a story which I have seen going the rounds of the newspapers, which charges him with having ordered certain officers at Buena Vista under arrest, for having come to serenade him; all of which, it is well known, grew out of a mistaken apprehension of the character and object of the party, who were at the moment supposed to be rioters, violating the rules of order established for the camp. That Gen. Wool is not opposed to recreations, or insensible to compliments of this character, I well know, having been present on several occasions, when the governor of Monterey, Colonel Tibbets, serenaded him with the fine band of the 16th Infantry. I am sure that I have never in my life seen more gratification, more urbanity, more kind treatment, or more true and liberal hospitality displayed by anybody on any occasion. He, in a word, on these occasions, shewed himself to be what we consider the beau ideal of a gentleman, and what we call *a true Virginia gentleman*. I have never seen a gentleman whose urbanity of manners in the social circle was more to be admired.

The 22d of February was celebrated at Monterey by a festival, and with ceremonies appropriate to the occasion. The day had now become more significant than ever: auspicious in the eyes of all Americans, from two great events in their history; it being the anniversary of the

birth of Washington, and of the commencement of the glorious battle of Buena Vista.

The dinner was given by the officers of the 16th regiment, then posted in the city, to General Wool, and such of the officers as had fought in the great battle, and were then present in the city. In this distant country, the Americans felt in all their strength the associations with which memory connects them with their own; and those associations were exalted into burning enthusiasm, when they beheld amongst them the victorious general, who, on the direful but glorious days of the battle, "where danger fiercest pressed the field, came like a beam of light;" and the commander of that death-dealing artillery, which so often turned the fluctuating tides of the battle, bearing the name and kindred blood of Washington. These remarkable coincidences imparted the deepest interest to the celebration. "General Wool," says the editor of the Monterey Gazette, "was apparently in excellent health and spirits; and by his kindness and urbanity of manners towards all, encouraged the festivity and hilarity of the dinner, and, when called upon, responded in a beautiful and appropriate speech." His health, with an eulogistic sentiment, being proposed, was drank with enthusiasm. The general then gave the 16th regiment, which was responded to by Adjutant Helm in an eloquent speech.

"We heard," said he, in the course of his speech, "that our favorite Generals, Taylor and our heroic guest, with their Spartan band, were in danger of being overpowered by numbers: a chord of sympathy was touched, the lion-hearted and the iron-nerved were ready to desert families, friends, home, and country; and in less than six weeks after the first recruiting flag was thrown to the breeze, one thousand rank and file had embarked for the seat of war. They paused not to enquire whether the present was a just or an unjust war. Their countrymen were in danger!" Major Washington was greeted with an appropriate toast, and made an appropriate reply.

General Wool gave the following:

"*General Taylor:* He has returned to the bosom of his family, crowned with a wreath of laurels; bearing on his shield the victories of Palo Alto, Resaca de la Palma, Monterey, and Buena Vista."

General Wool took occasion to repel, with utter scorn, the insinuations of some malignant and busy spirits, which had gained some currency in the United States, "that he had advised General Taylor to fall back or retreat from the position occupied by the American troops at the pass of Angostura." The assertion, he said, was wholly false, and without the shadow of a foundation. He considered it the only spot in the valley of Saltillo which could be defended by a small force against vast odds, and had selected it as such, two months before the battle was fought.

Dr. Hensley, the surgeon of the 16th, who was present at the battle of Buena Vista, related in a humorous manner his experiences. Until four on the morning of the 24th, he could get no sleep, having been incessantly employed in dressing the wounded. He then, with another surgeon, rode to the field of battle; both threw themselves on the ground, and with a blanket beneath, and another over them, with their saddle-bags for pillows. As he had obtained no sleep for three days and nights,

it came to him immediately. "The gray of the morning," continued the doctor, "had just began to streak the valley, when we were roused from sleep by the voice of General Wool, on the hill above us, calling out: 'Three cheers, men! Santa Anna has retreated, and the field is ours!'" The doctor responded to the cheers, which soon rang through the field. The doctor then proposed, "*Long life to General Wool*, always among the first to meet the enemy, and, in this instance, the very first to discover his retreat."

During the joyous hilarity of this day and evening, a shade of remembrance must have called up in the minds of many, the horror and gloom of the same night a year before.

On the 23d of February, General Wool, in order to give protection to the inhabitants, against the incursions of the Camanche Indians, ordered Captain Harper, of the Virginia regiment, an intelligent, zealous, and active officer, with five companies, to take a position near Parras. At the same time, he wrote to Viazco, the governor, with whom he was on confidential terms, that Captain Harper had his entire confidence, and with whom he could confer on any subject connected with the interest and safety of his people; and expressing the hope that he would give him good advice, as the object was to protect the people of Parras and the vicinity from massacre and plunder by the savages, who had now extended their incursions against the Mexicans to the country between the Rio Grande and Monterey, and even beyond, as far as Durango and Zacatecas. Previous to this, the general had sent out, on three several occasions, parties who had chastised the Indians; and on one occasion, a large amount of property was recovered from them, with a number of women and children, by a party from Colonel Doniphan's command. The property, with the women and children, was delivered up to the Mexicans. Was ever a war carried on, with as much humanity towards an enemy? It was true, as Colonel Aguire said to the general on one occasion: "You are our greatest enemy, for you conquer us by your kindness and humanity. We can not induce our people to take up arms against you."

General Wool, although a soldier for more than thirty-five years, delighted neither in the "pride, pomp, and circumstance," or in the battles and bloodshed of war. In a letter addressed to the governor of Parras, the senior Viazco (March 20th), he says: "I am anxiously looking for a settlement of the difficulties between the United States and Mexico. I assure you, no one more ardently prays for peace, than I do. Under the most favorable circumstances, war is an evil greatly to be deprecated. With all the energy I possessed, and ever-watchfulness, I have been unable to check its demoralizing effects, and to prevent acts and conduct revolting to my feelings."

The general had been much perplexed by the various and contradictory reports of the disposition of the Mexican Congress, respecting a final treaty of peace. He had projected an expedition against Zacatecas, and was ready to move, when the small-pox broke out in Colonel E. W. Butler's regiment of dragoons, which was to form his cavalry force, and delayed the movement; and before the dragoons were in a condition to march, he was officially notified of the armis-

tice. In anticipation of this movement, besides the troops at Saltillo, he had thrown forward, towards Zacatecas, considerable bodies of troops. All military movements, in consequence of the armistice (received 22d March), were suspended. Reduced to a state of inaction, the officers of the volunteers became restive; and so many applied for leave to return to the United States, that had the permission been granted, the army would have become inefficient, and in a degree disorganized. The refusal of the general to indulge them, created some discontent, which he endeavored to allay by persuasion, and by convincing them that the question of peace or war would be speedily determined. If the war should continue, he would promised them full occupation: if peace was made, then the whole army would return to the United States. The general prepared himself, as well as he was able, for either alternative. A large train of wagons was ready to move, at a moment's notice, to the frontier of the United States, from Monterey; and the evacuation of the country, on the northern line, in the event of peace, speedily accomplished; and another train, at the other end of the line, at Camargo, with ample supplies, in case of the renewal of the war, was in perfect order for a forward movement on Monterey.

On the 5th of June, 1848, General Wool received from Messrs Sevier and Clifford, the American Commissioners, official notice of the termination of the war; the ratifications of the treaty, signed at Guadalupe Hidalgo on the 2d of February, having been exchanged on the 30th of May.

On the reception of this notice, the Army of Occupation, then occupying several posts distant from each other, were put in motion, and ordered to concentrate at Matamoras. The incessant labors of General Wool, and the heat of the climate in June, had an injurious effect on his health; yet in a state of extreme debility, he was compelled to overlook every movement of the troops, and to take every precaution to prevent disorders. On the 20th of June he left Monterey with his staff, and arrived at Matamoras on the 2d of July. On the 4th, he reviewed Colonel Temple's regiment, and shared, so far as his health permitted, in the festivities of the day. On the 5th, he embarked in a steam boat for Brazos, and left a people whom he had overcome by his valor, and conciliated by his wisdom; and well deserved the eulogium of the Mexican alcalde, "You have won us by your kindness: you have conquered us by your humanity."

General Wool arrived at Brazos St. Jago, in Texas, in July; and on the 20th, visited Point Isabel, where he was received with the usual military honors. On the 26th of July, he embarked in a steam boat for New Orleans, where he arrived on the first of August, and was visited by the governor and suite, and other distinguished citizens. On the 2d, he left for Cincinnati, where he arrived on the 12th, and on the 17th reached Washington.

The citizens of Troy, the place of General Wool's residence, as early as the 3d of August, took measures to receive him with due honors, at his return from his long and arduous services in Mexico. A meeting was held on that day, and resolutions were unanimously adopted, that preparations should be made to receive and welcome, "to manifest, not

only our joy at his safe return, but a suitable public demonstration, to honor a gallant and brave soldier before an enemy, a rigid disciplinarian in camp, and our honored and respected fellow citizen at home." The city government were also requested to appoint a suitable committee, to receive him at some suitable point, and escort him home; and the city government were further requested to take measures to receive him in a manner proper to him, and to the city. One hundred of the most eminent citizens were appointed to this service.

General Wool arrived in the city of New York on the 18th of August, where he was received by the Citizens' Corps, commanded by Colonel Pierce, and a committee of one hundred citizens from Troy. On the morning of the 19th, he was escorted by the New York City Guards, the Troy Citizens' Corps and committee of one hundred, to the steamboat Hendrick Hudson, which the Trojans had chartered to conduct the general to their city and his home. On his way up the river, the general was frequently cheered, as he passed, by the citizens on the shore; and especially at Poughkeepsie, Albany, and West Troy. On his arrival at Troy, he was greeted enthusiastically by the whole people who had assembled to receive him. So great and dense was the assemblage on the docks, and in the streets, that several hours elapsed, before he reached his residence, where he was affectionately received by his family and friends. A more generous, enthusiastic, and heart-felt reception, could not have been given to mortal man, than was tendered by the people of Troy to the general on his return from Mexico. It was truly the home greeting.

On the passage, after dinner, the Honorable Mr. Hadley, the speaker of the New York Assembly, gave a toast, prefaced by an elegant speech: "The health of General Wool, the hero of Buena Vista." The general rose, and modestly declined the honor, and gave General Taylor as the hero.

A New York editor, in noticing his return, says: "This gallant officer returns to his quiet fireside, with his high reputation unblemished by any charge of political ambition. He has done his duty as a soldier, with consummate skill and indomitable valor, without any hankering after the flesh-pots of Egypt. He performed one of the greatest marches of modern times (from our western frontier, to Saltillo in Mexico, some 900 miles), with a half disciplined army, without losing a man or permitting an outrage; and, although an invader, was every where followed by the blessings of the Mexican people. He trained the larger portion of the army, that fought the battle of Buena Vista; chose the ground, formed the order of battle, and opened the glorious conflict.

"He returns unheralded by newspaper laudation, *alone with his glory.* But his native state will not forget her hero. Troy received him last evening with a shout of welcome, into which her citizens threw their whole hearts, and the entire state will reverberate their acclamations."

The citizens of Troy, soon after the reception of the news of the battle of Buena Vista, always proud of their townsman, resolved to manifest their sense of his merits, by honoring him in the mode most appropriate to his profession.

On the 8th of April, the mayor, recorder, aldermen, &c., assembled

in common council, and, in a preamble to resolutions, expressed their gratification in hearing of "the courage and gallant bearing of General Wool" at the battle of Buena Vista; and resolved, that in mature life, he had well sustained the promise of his youth, at the battle of Queenston; that they felt proud of his renown as a soldier, and highly regarded him as a citizen; and, in the name of the city of Troy, would tender him a sword, "as a testimonial of the place he occupied in the esteem of those who have known him so long and so well, and as a memorial (though not a reward) of the distinguished services he has rendered to the country."

On the 10th, there was a general meeting of the citizens: complimentary resolutions were unanimously passed, and several eloquent and eulogistic speeches were made, particularly by Mr. Hadley the speaker of the New York Assembly, Judge Buel, Judge Hunt, Mr. Gould, General Viele, Mr. Townsend, Mr. Jonas C. Heartt, and several others.

The committee appointed to procure the sword, had employed eminent artists, who had succeeded in producing a rich and beautiful article, bearing in the inscription the names of *Queenston, Plattsburgh, and Buena Vista.*

After the general's arrival, the citizens of Troy resolved to give him a public reception on the 23d of August; and, at the same time, present the sword.

On the morning of the appointed day, a large number of uniform companies were assembled. The people of the country, for a long distance, came in throngs to the city of Troy, filling all the houses, streets, squares and open places, all anxious to gain a glimpse of the renowned warrior, who had returned from a country far more distant from the domestic hearth, than that mysterious land traversed by the crusaders; bearing the trophies from a field of battle, as glorious as Ascalon; and calling up, in romantic minds, remembrance of the chivalry of Spain, and the splendid empire of the Aztecs, of the hero Cortez, and the Emperor Montezuma. He had not, indeed, *revelled in his halls*; but he had performed a great part in wresting his domain from the posterity of his tyrants.

Besides the uniform companies of Troy, Albany and Lansingburgh, corps came from the city of New York, Utica, Rochester, Schenectady, Saratoga, and Syracuse, and from various other places. Seven fine bands of music were in attendance. Among the military of rank and distinction, were General Wool and staff, the Governor's staff, Gen. Stevens, Col. Van Vechten, Col. Carman, Gen. Storms and staff, Maj. Bogart, Maj. Mumford and Maj. Morgan, Col. Baker and staff, Gen. Cooper and staff, Hon. Millard Fillmore and Hon. C. Morgan of the State Department.

General Wool's residence was surrounded and filled with crowds, all eager to offer their congratulations. When the military appeared, Gen. Viele, as their representative, addressed him; and after recounting, in brief terms, the story of his exploits, concluded as follows:

"For these distinguished services, we greet you with this military compliment. We have here, with us, the representatives of the Empire City, and of Western New York; united, we offer you the humble tribute of our grateful hearts. Your history, services, and success, prove to us

that there is security for our country, and protection for our rights, in the intelligence and patriotism of a citizen soldiery. They are additional evidence, that military genius depends not entirely upon the schools. Like poetry, painting, and sculpture, it is the endowment of nature; it is the gift of God. Allow me to welcome, thrice welcome, war's conquering hero home."

General Wool briefly replied:

"But yesterday I was amidst the enemies of my country; to-day I am surrounded by the friends of my youth, and the associations of many happy years. To the soldier who has devoted his whole life to his duty, no reward can equal the sympathy of friends.

"The noble manner in which I have been sustained by my native State, and particularly by the citizens of Troy, has filled me with the deepest emotion, so much so that I feel utterly incapable of expressing the dictates of a grateful heart.

"Receive my thanks, sir, for the flattering manner in which you have alluded to my services in the last war, and in that which has just closed. Whatever I was fortunate enough to perform in the former, now belongs to the history of the past; in the latter, it has been my good fortune to be associated with one of its most extraordinary battles. I see, sir, in the citizen soldiery here present, the same kind of force that gained the day in that unequal struggle. The volunteers on that field sustained the glory of their country in one of its darkest hours; and finally, though attacked by forces so far superior that to resist was thought madness by some, after the most heroic sacrifices, gained a victory unsurpassed by any of the war. The battle of Buena Vista must teach our country that its strength lies in her sons; and that in the hour of danger, the citizen-soldier is able and willing to face the enemy, either on our own soil or in a foreign land, and that its honor and glory can be entrusted implicitly to his care."

The general, having concluded his reply amidst the cheers and shoutings of the multitude, reviewed the troops, who then escorted him to the court-house, where he was formally received by the city authorities and a large committee of citizens; and in behalf of the citizens, was addressed by George Gould, Esq. whose speech contained many eloquent passages, some of which are selected. "You were called," said he, "not to the field where *the shouts of battle and the shock of arms* give to war its splendor and to man his fame; but to the bare hill-side, which you were to make a camp; to the raw volunteers, unclothed, unprovided for, untaught, whom *you* were to transform into soldiers. And not merely this; but those volunteers bred in a freedom that had hardly heard of law; ignorant of all discipline, chafing at restraint, impatient of control. Further: they were to be trained as they marched on to their destination; and every day added to the numbers of the motley band, and increased your labors. The difficulties of such a march within our territory, were sufficiently arduous; but when the frontier was reached, the path of duty was still onward; and still on and on the wilderness stretched its weary way, and beyond it lay the hostile country and the foe. Rare are the instances (if indeed there be any) of such a march as yours; conducted with order, despatch, and, above all, absolutely without loss. Nor is this all: at its termination, the forces (at starting so ill appointed and untrained) came forth a

well regulated army, ready and able to stand the fiery brunt of battle, with the courage and conduct of veterans. The system and the discipline that had been traduced, that had been met by disaffection and almost by mutiny, were tried in the hour of peril, and were not found wanting."

The orator then alluded, in a very happy manner, to Lord Nelson: his close attention to every minute detail of the naval service, and the perfection of organization which he attained, and by his rigorous discipline, was enabled to triumph at the Nile and Trafalgar. "If," said he, "the world's great admiral found his fame for having used these means, where is the hero that would not gladly be honored for the same cause? And such claims to honor," addressing General Wool, "you have. The materials out of which a great proportion of the conquerors at Buena Vista were formed, came to your hand in a state almost of chaos; and by your hourly, constant care, were fitted for the horrors, the struggles, and the result of that bloody field."

In conclusion, the orator said: "Guided by a merciful Providence, through thousands of miles, you have been for two years exposed to every vicissitude of season and climate; 'to the pestilence that walketh in darkness, and the destruction that wasteth at noon-day;' and in and through all, in the tent and in the field, from mountain to shore, you have been protected, and you are at home."

The mayor of Troy, Mr. F. N. Mann, then addressed General Wool; and among many other just and sensible remarks, he said, "Though in an enemy's country, his rights were respected, and equivalents paid for all your supplies. The morals of your army were preserved by exacting and doing justice from and to all; and your enemies were conquered and made friends by your justice, clemency and humanity. And be assured, General, that such a victory is more honorable to the victor, than the most brilliant blood-bought battles fought in Mexico."

When the mayor delivered the sword, amongst other things, he said: "Now, therefore, in consideration of the high esteem we entertain for you as a worthy, intelligent and much respected fellow-citizen, and as a brave and gallant soldier; and especially in consideration of your valiant conduct at the ever memorable battle of Buena Vista, Queenston Heights and Plattsburgh; and those high moral qualities that you exhibited during your eventful campaign in Mexico, which enabled you to conquer and make friends of your enemies by your clemency and humanity, and to take military possession of several large cities and towns without firing a gun, I, in behalf of the common council of the city of Troy, and of my fellow-citizens, do present to you this beautiful sword. Of itself, it is indeed a feeble tribute to such exalted worth and such distinguished services; but accompanied as it is with the grateful heart of a generous and rejoicing people, highly appreciating your merits and gallant services, you will please to accept it; and may it never be drawn, but in defence of the justice, the liberty, the honor and glory of our country; and when drawn, may it never! no, never!! be sheathed, until the justice, the liberty, the honor and glory of our country have been justly vindicated."

The sword was then delivered to General Wool, who, during these addresses, had manifested feelings of deep emotion. "The scene," says

one of the newspaper editors who was present, "was most beautiful and impressive. The platform was surrounded on all sides save the front, by ladies to the number of several hundreds: in front were eight companies formed in hollow square, with their many colored, brilliant uniforms and plumes." The windows and the park of the Female Seminary were filled. "General Wool, standing alone, erect and dignified, his whitened locks apparently holding dispute with features upon which powers of endurance seemed written," made the following reply:

Friends, Fellow-Citizens, and Soldiers:

On my return from the war in Mexico, I find myself in your midst, unexpectedly in a new sphere of action. I find myself engaged in the delightful but difficult task of responding to those spontaneous outpourings of the heart; those cordial and enthusiastic receptions which have greeted me, since my arrival in my native State. I had anticipated a welcome from my friends; but such a welcome as I received on landing in this city, and such as is now indicated in this vast assemblage, I neither anticipated, nor can venture to claim for mere public services. Much of it can only be ascribed to your partiality, to long standing associations. to the companions of my youth, and the associates of maturer years, whom I recognize before me, and whose steadiness of friendship and kindness has never failed to cheer and animate me in the darkest hour. Such friendship has been especially dear to me during my more than two years' absence; for, there have been times when, in the full consciousness of directing all the energies I possessed to the public good and the honor of my country, I found myself in situations where the encouraging voice of friendship was needed to cheer me under the heavy responsibilities which I was struggling to discharge. In the execution of those duties, I was sure to incur the displeasure of the discontented, and of those who could not appreciate the necessity of discipline. It would not have been difficult to flatter the love of indulgence and of ease, and to present the column I had organized and brought into the field of battle, in the garb, without the *discipline* of soldiers. But those who were at first most loud in their complaints, for my refusing to listen to that syren voice of popularity which would have extricated me at once from a labyrinth of unpleasant service, were the first in their acknowledgments, when convinced by the trial of a battle, of the mercy I had shown them in the very rigor I exacted to prepare them for the contest.

To you, the chief magistrate of this beautiful and enterprising city, my home and residence; and to you, the representative of the voice of its citizens, I make my grateful acknowledgments for the complimentary manner in which you have been pleased to present this splendid sword, as the common gift of the city and of its citizens individually. I receive it with a depth of gratitude which cannot be expressed by words. It is the testimonial of my own neighbors, my countrymen at home. It is the symbol of their appreciation of my character as a citizen and a soldier. Could ambition seek a higher reward? Could pride enjoy a nobler triumph? I can truly say, that I am more than compensated by this magnificent presentation and reception; this warm, glowing and heartfelt greeting, for all the toil, hardships, and dangers to which I have been exposed since I entered upon the duties that called me to Mexico.

The sword which I have received, I shall hold as the dearest gift of my life. If our country should again need my services in the field, and this arm should not become, by age, too feeble to raise itself in vindication of the natural rights, your confidence, as implied in this gift, shall be sustained to the fullest extent of my ability.

It is not necessary for me to follow the tenor of your addresses, by recapitulating the course of my action in the two wars to which you have alluded. History has recorded the events of the first: the future historian will embody the materials of the last.

In reference, however, to the battle of Buena Vista, to which you have so flatteringly alluded, my services prior to and during that engagement are sufficiently noticed in the official language of the commanding general, which you have quoted; and I agree with that distinguished officer, that "a soldier's share" is all that need be claimed in the glories of that memorable conflict.

Citizen Soldiers: It gives me pleasure to witness, this day, the beautiful order, equipment and appointment which you have displayed. We are an armed republic, but our arms are in our own hands. We stand ready to defend the public liberty, because it is our own. The world is awakened to the fact that a citizen-soldiery constitutes their own government, the strongest on earth. No large standing armies are here necessary. A small regular force, and a sufficient number of educated and experienced officers, may always be an expedient resource to give example and instruction.

I thank you, with a soldier's heart, for your attendance on this occasion; and, on your return to your respective homes, bear with you, and to your families, my best wishes for your prosperity and happiness.

And now, my friends, townsmen, and fellow citizens, permit me to conclude my part in this interesting drama, by renewing to you all the sincerest expressions of my deep and heart-felt gratitude.

The thunders of cannon, the animating sounds of martial music, the deafening cheers of 40,000 people, the splendid array of the citizen soldiers, "all furnished, all in arms;" the contrast between military splendor and civic dignity; the pathway of a victor, strewn with flowers, by female hands; the honors to the conqueror, and the deep, heart-felt welcome to the friend and neighbor, all presented, during the exciting ceremonials of the day, scenes which kindled the enthusiasm of all generous and romantic minds. Eloquence aroused her energies: poetry offered her tributes.

"Such honors, Ilion to her hero paid."

In the legislature of New York, resolutions voting thanks to Generals Taylor and Worth, were discussed in the early part of February, 1847, before the battle of Buena Vista had been fought. Mr. Clarke, of the Senate, moved as an amendment that the name of General Wool should be inserted in the vote of thanks, and followed his motion with a speech, which, in clear and lucid terms, was a narrative of the events in the military life of General Wool. The amendment was supported by the Honorable Joshua A. Spencer, another senator, who, in alluding to the march of General Wool from San Antonio to Parras, said: "It was a

service much less glorious in the eyes of the world, but as difficult of performance as any other." The amendment prevailed, and the thanks of the legislature of New York were voted to Generals Taylor, Wool and Worth.

On the 10th of April, 1848, the following resolutions were unanimously voted by both branches of the legislature of New York :

"Resolved, That the thanks of this legislature are due, and are hereby tendered to our distinguished fellow-citizen, Brigadier General John E. Wool, for his valor, skill, and judicious conduct, conspicuously displayed in organizing and preparing for the service of his country, with unprecedented rapidity, more than 12,000 volunteers in the summer of 1846; in disciplining the column under his command, during a rapid march through the enemy's country; disarming the enemy by his humane and vigilant observances of their rights; in the courage and good conduct displayed in the battle of Buena Vista, his uniform gallantry and activity on the field, and the ability and success with which he has since discharged his arduous and responsible duties.

"Resolved, That the Governor be, and he is hereby requested to procure a sword, with suitable emblems and devices, and present it to Brigadier General Wool, in the name of the people of this his native state, as a testimony of their high approbation of his services.

"Resolved, That the governor be, and is hereby requested to cause the foregoing resolutions to be communicated to Brigadier General Wool, in such terms as he may deem best calculated to give effect to the purposes thereof."

The governor discharged the duty assigned him, by employing the most skilful artists in the city of New York to manufacture a sword. Much taste and judgment were displayed in the selection of the emblems and devices, which were appropriate, and referred in a striking manner to the military exploits of the New York General.

The 30th of December, 1848, was the day appointed for the presentation of the sword, and the Capitol at Albany was the place selected for the ceremony. On the morning of that day, General Wool, whose health was completely restored, escorted by the citizen soldiers of Troy, repaired to Albany, where he was received with military honors; and as he passed to the Capitol, was greeted with the cheers of multitudes, while handkerchiefs were waved by ladies at every window. Collations were spread out in many houses, and the joy occasioned by the arrival of the renowned soldier of New York was universal. The pressure of the crowd in the Capitol was so great, that the ceremonies were performed in the open air, although the day was cold and disagreeable. The governor, surrounded by the state officers, then addressed the general. He said that the resolutions were adopted at the instance of one of the most accomplished statesmen of his years, that he ever had the pleasure of knowing. "I have felt, in common with the people of the state," continued the governor, "and have participated as deeply in the public sentiment which has been manifested in reference to your public services, as any person in the community where I live. I may not now—the laws of society, while addressing you, will not allow me to, borrow the language of eulogy; but I trust I may be permitted to

state that these resolutions were not adopted by a small community, by the citizens of a single city, by an association of personal friends; nor did they come up from any partizan organization. It is the full and free expression of the whole people of this, your native state. That expression was made irrespective of religious opinions, or professions of faith. That expression was made irrespective of political distinction, or political organization. It is the full and free expression, allow me to repeat, *of the people of this whole state*, in the form prescribed by the laws and usages of the country. This expression then must be regarded by us, and I trust will not be otherwise regarded by you, as second only in significance to the expression of this great nation, through both houses of the Congress of the United States.

"The resolutions to which I refer, and under which we now come here, have been restricted in their language to the Mexican War." But the governor did not altogether regard the restriction, but touched gracefully upon incidents in General Wool's military life previous to that war. In conclusion, his excellency said: "I now, in conformity with the resolutions of the legislature, present to you the sword procured for this purpose, in the name of the people of this state, and in testimony of their high appreciation of your services to your country, and of the honor thus reflected upon your native state."

Under feelings of deep excitement and strong emotion, General Wool made the following eloquent reply:

"Sir: When a soldier returns from a long and perilous campaign, to his home and his fireside; there is, there can be, no solace so grateful to his feelings, as the approbation of his fellow citizens. That approbation has been manifested in various modes, by different nations. The Jews received the successful soldier, returning from the field of battle, with trump and timbrel, and raised the choral hymn of praise; the Romans, with the decorative wreaths of oak and laurel, with ovations, and with the magnificent triumphal procession; the English, with promotions, medals, peerages, and pensions; while the more practical Americans have preferred to manifest their sense of military merit, by bestowing, generally, swords upon such as they believe would wear them with honor, and sheath them without disgrace.

"In this manner, with other demonstrations, my neighbors and fellow citizens of a city in this vicinity, where I have long had my home, manifested their sense of my services, on my return from Mexico. Perhaps, within the limited sphere of that city, some personal partialities, some feelings of private friendship might have had an influence on popular sentiment. It was, however, the home greeting; and you, sir, can readily imagine what were my feelings.

"But the unanimous approbation of the great State of New York, as indicated by the votes of its legislature; a state of which I am proud to say I am a native, and which has ever been my home; in defence of whose frontier, I first shed my youthful blood; I confess, has filled me with emotions, which, although they open all the genial currents of the heart, sometimes paralyze the tongue when it would utter the voice of gratitude. I can, therefore, only say, that the approbation of my native state, expressed twice during my absence in Mexico, through the re

presentatives of the people, is an honor for which I entertain the most profound appreciation. The resolutions first passed by the legislature were received soon after the bloody battle of Buena Vista, where so many gallant spirits fell in defence of their country. It was a proud moment to learn that my own state had given me its confidence in advance, and before the news of the battle had reached its capital. It was the first voice from my country, that had reached me in that wild and lonely valley, after the surrounding mountains had echoed the thunder of the battle. It more than compensated for all the hardships and perils I had endured. It was, indeed, a proud but melancholy moment: a moment of mixed pleasure and sadness; for many, who went with me, had fallen to rise no more.

"Of my services, to which your excellency has so flatteringly alluded, commencing with the battle of Queenston, my first essay in arms, and terminating with the campaign in Mexico, it becomes not me to speak. For those in the war of 1812, I must refer to history; and for those more recent, to which allusion has been made in the resolutions of the legislature, as well as in your excellency's address, to the reports of the commanding general, and the evidence of those who witnessed my efforts to promote the honor and interest of my country. If in a long military career, whether in peace or war, I have been so fortunate in the discharge of the various and responsible duties confided to me, as to command the approbation of my countrymen, and especially of my native state, my ambition is more than satisfied.

"It may not, however, have escaped notice, that censures loud and deep were lavished on me, in consequence of the rigorous—denominated by some tyrannical—discipline which I enforced upon the volunteers of my command, whose achievements on the field of battle have spread their renown throughout the land. Those who have never experienced the trials and hardships to which the soldier is exposed in a foreign war, have little idea of their magnitude. To the inexperienced, the difficulties appear insurmountable; to the undisciplined, they are insupportable. Toil and privation are inevitable. The country invaded, must be explored; roads and bridges made, rivers crossed, ravines filled, hills levelled, and supplies for men and animals procured. If my soldiers endured hardships, I shared them; but they had no share in my responsibilities. If my discipline appeared harsh or unnecessarily rigorous, it became so from stern necessity. We were in the heart of the enemy's country, beyond the reach of supplies from the United States. I could not foresee the amount of force which might be brought against us, and constant vigilance was requisite; for the slightest relaxation of discipline might have been followed by the most fatal consequences, and the very existence of my column put at hazard. For at this early day it was reported that Santa Anna was concentrating, organizing and disciplining a large army to drive us, as he asserted, beyond the Rio Grande, if not the Sabine. Depending in a great measure upon the people of the country for supplies, it was essential that their good will should be secured. This could only be done, by convincing them that no wrong or injustice was intended. Of this they became convinced; and such supplies as I required, and they could obtain, were liberally furnished. To

establish this state of things, and in order to preserve the honor of my country, and myself and column from disgrace, severe measures and strict adherence to the rules of discipline became necessary. I am, however, proud to say, that in the course of that march of 900 miles, not a drop of human blood was shed, and no injury inflicted upon the inhabitants of the country. It affords me also great pleasure to say, that many who complained of my severity, have since publicly expressed their gratitude for that discipline, which they frankly acknowledged saved the honor of the American name, and their own lives and honor, in one of the bloodiest battles ever fought on this continent, and between the races which now hold dominion over North America. It commenced on the birthday of the father of his country; and on the following day, the Saxon Norman race, amidst the direst perils that ever surrounded soldiers, principally volunteers, and in all scarcely numbering 4600 men, under the command of the illustrious General Taylor, drove more than 20,000 Mexicans led on by Santa Anna, the great civil and military chieftain of Mexico, with disgrace from the fields of Buena Vista. A glorious victory, but purchased too dearly, for much precious blood was sacrificed. Yet it was not sacrificed in vain, and posterity will reap the benefit, by emulating the heroic deeds of those who fell on those fields. If the battle had terminated otherwise, and the pass of Angostura had been forced by the Mexicans, the valley from Buena Vista to the Rio Grande would have been saturated with American blood. Death would have numbered its victims by thousands instead of hundreds.

"I accept this splendid sword, this precious gift which you, sir, as the organ and chief magistrate of the state, have tendered to me in the name of the people, as a token of their estimation of my services, with feelings which you can appreciate, but which I cannot express. I trust it will only be drawn in defence of my country, and never sheathed but with honor.

"To your excellency, for the flattering and complimentary manner in which you have been pleased to present it, I tender my grateful acknowledgments.

"Citizen soldiers—For the honor you have conferred on me this day, and the interest you have manifested on this occasion, please to accept my sincere and hearty thanks. Your fine appearance and martial bearing bespeak your discipline and instruction. A government supported by citizen soldiery, must be the strongest in the world. As long as you can appear, as on this occasion, and at similar public assemblages, with arms in your hands, the republic will be safe. But if the time should arrive, when the people shall be prohibited the right of keeping and bearing arms, the freedom which we so highly prize will have departed. Let us cherish, then, this invaluable privilege; this great conservative feature of our free institutions, which, while it banishes the necessity of large standing armies, renders the republic invincible."

The ceremony over, General Wool, accompanied by Gov. Young, Lieut. Gov. Fish, the state officers, &c., was escorted by the military to Congress Hall, where a collation had been prepared, and where citizens and strangers had an opportunity to interchange congratulations with the distinguished guest. Thus ended one of the most interesting affairs

of the kind which it has been our good fortune to witness. It will long be remembered as among the most interesting incidents connected with the close of a glorious war.

It was impossible that General Wool should not have been gratified with the warm cordiality and distinguished honors with which he was received in the city of his residence, and the state of his nativity. The whole people of the greatest state in the American Union, laying aside their bitter political animosities, united for once to honor one of their most distinguished citizens. General Wool had wrought a political miracle; and with a single exception, not a voice, amongst a population of millions, was raised to decry his high and heroic qualities, and his wonderful genius for war. Statesmen and lawyers, merchants, mechanics and farmers, were animated with one spirit. The song of the poet was heard amidst the shoutings of the people. The following is a specimen of many :

We welcome the warrior who comes from the field,
With his honor unstained, and brings back his shield;
Who, when all his marches and battles are o'er,
Seeks peace and repose on his own native shore;

Of victory, shuns the pride, pomp and display,
And hears not the shouts which resound on his way;
Who seeks not for fame through a parasite pen,
But engraves with his sword deeds worthy of men.

We welcome the victor triumphant from fight,
Who planted our banner on Queenston's proud height.
We welcome the victor who never turn'd back,
When blood stained the shores of the dark Saranac:

Who shook to their base the Mexican mountains,
Discolored with blood their streams and their fountains.
The hosts of the foe, all radiant and bright,
Proud, boasting and fierce, came in crowds to the fight:

They were frantic with rage, and burning with wrath;
But two lions were there, who lay in their path:
In sorrow, they long will look back to they day,
When in terror, they fled from Buena Vista!

Then hail to the heroes who conquered a peace,
And won for their country the glory of Greece!
And you, gallant Wool! having finished your work,
We welcome you home, bravest son of New York!

Such testimonials, from the people who best knew General Wool, were an ample compensation for the neglect of the government, who delayed his promotion to the brevet of a major general, and who outranked him with obscure men and political demagogues; and for the neglect of Congress, who awarded swords and medals for party—not military services.

After General Wool's return, his head quarters were established at the city of Troy; a place particularly endeared to him, from the many associations with which it was connected, and where much of his early life was spent. By the death of General Gaines, he became second in command in the American army; and although his duties were arduous, yet by industry, and close attention, he was enabled to master them, and to devote considerable time to the pleasures of social life, for which he was

eminently adapted, and well versed in all its arts. With a quick and excitable temper, he never harbors revenge, and never suffers any personal resentments to shade the habitual courtesy of his manners. Stern and exacting as he may be in the camp: at his own home, he is kind, friendly, generous and unassuming. He lives in a style of elegant, but unostentatious hospitality; and his companions in arms, distinguished strangers who seek his acquaintance, and all men of real talent and genius, receive that welcome to his house, which springs warm from the heart, without any affectation of display. With a taste cultivated by reading, in conversation, he touches easily and gracefully on all current literary and political topics. Without alarming the sensitiveness of his guests and companions, he can kindle the hidden fires of their minds, and enjoy in silence the play of the fountain of the soul after he has broken its ice.

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